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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

UNIT SELF-STUDY AS A VIABLE EVALUATION PROCESS IN AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

BY

JANICE MARGERY JACKSON

A THESIS SUBMITTED
TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

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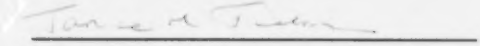

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, at thesis entitled UNIT SELF-STUDY AS A VIABLE EVALUATION PROCESS IN AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION submitted by Janice Margery Jackson in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY.

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MAY 11, 1992

ABSTRACT

Institutional self-evaluation, program review and self-study implemented in institutions of higher education can be an internally motivated or externally motivated process. The use of this form of evaluation has increased over the years and has been instituted for various reasons such as program improvement, resource allocation and accountability. Of interest was whether the expectations held of institutional self-evaluation, program and unit self-study are realistic.

As a result, this research was designed to explore the meaning of the self-study phase of the program review process for members of one unit of an institution of higher education, to identify factors which informed the construction of that meaning and to examine how the meaning and its construction influenced and were influenced by the process which evolved.

Using the case study method, the research entailed interviews with nine primary participants who were members of the unit and three members of the university administration as well as the perusal of relevant documents.

The self-study was experienced differently by participants, partly as a result of their proximity to the sphere of preparation of the report. It also addressed what I have referred to as the collective public self of the unit, those issues which were reportable. The manner in which the self-study was conceptualized, designed and implemented did not accommodate the collective private self of the unit. This collective private self was characterized by the collective self-image gleaned from the contributions of primary participants.

The self-study process and product were influenced related to the external and internal contexts of the unit and the self-perceptions of its members. Therefore the research addressed external, internal and self considerations and their implications for the conduct of in-depth, effective self-study.

PREFACE

My involvement in measurement and evaluation practice resulted in increasing dissatisfaction with my role as assessor of the aptitudes, abilities and performance of others and enterprises (programs and projects) in which others had great stake. This dissatisfaction was influenced by my concern about the degree to which I was capturing and reflecting what was the reality for the individuals whose aptitudes, abilities or performance were being evaluated or for the persons who were involved in the enterprises under study. It led to increased interest in determination of the ability of individuals or participants and beneficiaries of enterprises to engage in self-evaluation.

While I perused evaluation literature, I became more and more aware that practitioners of evaluation have been plagued and confounded by the degree of nonutilization of evaluation results. Although they have approached evaluation from a diversity of perspectives, including the consideration of the needs of different stakeholders, they are still to arrive at an approach which facilitates more readily the acceptance of the results of the evaluation and an inclination to use those results in overt ways by the stakeholders and decision makers.

The opportunity to pursue this interest arose since the University of Alberta had, at the time of my tenure as a graduate student, employed a program review process which required units in the university to engage in self-study. This provided me the scope of investigating the feasibility of a system of evaluation which I intuitively felt was superior to the one commonly used.

As I attempted to develop the focus of my research, to delineate research questions and to map out a research strategy, I read a wide cross-section of available literature. My thinking was greatly influenced by the work of Kells (1981, 1983) who is one of the leaders in the area of self-study as an integral part of the accreditation process and, more particularly, by that of Torbert (1976, 1978, 1981a) who examined the notions of self-

study and collaborative enquiry. As a result of these influences, I developed a world view which held that self-study had the potential to be a process of collaborative enquiry which, if viewed and operationalized as an internal process, had much potential to serve a liberating function within a unit of an organization or the organization as a whole. As such, I viewed self-study as an evaluative strategy which could bring about positive change within an organization and could result in a situation where members of an organization have an opportunity to engage in personal and collective self-reflection leading to congruence between individual and organizational purpose as well as cohesiveness among members. I also came to think of the self-study process as being as potent as or more potent than the self-study report itself.

My experience with self-study in the participating unit was one which caused me to continually reflect on my world view and to question the viability of my expectations of the self-study process. It proved to be extremely educative not only in terms of the possibilities of and for the process and outcomes of self-study but also with regards to the research enterprise and the particular method which I had selected. It also gave insights into some of the problems encountered in the wider area of evaluation.

Two of my expectations which were not realized serve as useful illustrations. I had intended to include students as participants in the research since I considered them to be integral to the unit. However, my request to do so was denied by the Chairman of the Ethics Review Committee. Therefore, the participants were all members of the academic staff of the unit. As a result, I could not pursue the perspective of students. Also, the role of students in the self-study could not be explored in detail although I was informed that student representatives sit on the Executive Committee and in that manner had an opportunity to participate in the self-study and that both the undergraduate and graduate students' associations prepared sections for inclusion in the report.

The second expectation was the possibility of self-study to function as collaborative enquiry. The processes in the Faculty actually worked counter to this possibility. For, while Faculty members often taught in teams, they rarely engaged in collaborative research. Also, their conceptualization of unit self-study was one which did not foster this approach to self-knowledge.

What follows represents the experiences with self-study of selected members of one unit of an institution of higher education set against a series of contexts. It also portrays what has been learnt from those shared experiences. It is a representation built on themes and issues which emerged more resonantly from the conversations with selected members of the participating unit.

The forthcoming description and analysis of the implementation and outcomes of self-study is not exhaustive. Rather, it is illuminative of the possibilities of a process which I espouse and which, I believe, has the potential to bring about individual and organizational growth and development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As I travelled down the long and winding road which led to completion of this research, I met and interacted with many people who made the journey endurable and often enjoyable. I now salute some of them by name.

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CHAPTER 1

The Context of the Research

A. Introduction

Evaluation theorizing has principally been advanced based on the experiences, analyses and perspectives of evaluators who have been external to the enterprise being evaluated. This theorizing has led to the development of a rich body of literature which explicates approaches to (models of) evaluation, evaluation as a decision-making strategy and the reasons and solutions for perceived non-utilization or underutilization of evaluation results. In his review of the state of program evaluation, Shapiro (1986) stated that the expectations of evaluation, particularly in terms of utilization of results, have generally not been achieved. He observed that "the field of evaluation has yet to resolve the issues of what constitutes appropriate conduct and use" (p. 182).

Approaches to evaluation have required different levels of objectivity by evaluators. Models such as Scriven's goal-free evaluation, Stufflebeam's decision-making evaluation and Tyler's goal-based evaluation take an objectivist stance while Parlett's illuminative, Patton's utilization-focused and Stake's responsive approaches have drawn more attention to the significance of the perspectives of those who are evaluated and are more subjectivist in nature. Yet the latter three and others of like orientation have stopped short of advancing theory from the perspective of the evaluated as evaluator.

Institutional self-evaluation and program review as internally- motivated forms of evaluation in institutions of higher education, more particularly the unit self-study component of program review, lend themselves to the examination of evaluation processes in which the evaluated also has the opportunity to perform the role of the evaluator. Within this approach lies the opportunity for promotion of an understanding of some of the internal dynamics of the evaluation enterprise.

The state of evaluation theory development and practice engenders a number of questions. Of interest here are ones related to whether evaluation theorists have failed to recognize the potency of "personal knowledge" as located within programs and the currency of ownership of that knowledge in approbating evaluation persuasions, and if so, what can be learnt from investigation of this perspective; if not, how has what has been learnt influenced the existing models. Also of interest is whether the expectations held of institutional self-evaluation, program review and unit self-study are realistic; that is, can effective self-evaluation be undertaken within organizations and, if so, what conditions would facilitate this; if not, why not. The purpose of this study was to investigate these questions in the context of the self-study stage of the program review process in an institution of higher education.

B. Purpose of the Research

Self-study as it applied in this investigation was an evaluation undertaken by individual units within one institution of higher education. During the self-study, units were given the task of engaging in in-depth, mature self-evaluation including reporting on their history, current status and future directions. Against this background, the study was designed to explore the meaning of the self-study phase of the program review process for members of one unit in the University of Alberta, to identify factors which informed the construction of that meaning and to examine how the meaning and its construction influenced and were influenced by the process which evolved. In addition, the study examined the viability of self-study as a basis for evaluation theorizing.

In order to pursue these objectives, the present research focused on the stages of and influences on the self-study as represented by the conceptualization of self-study by the unit, the initiation, organization and execution of the self-study, reasons for the approaches used as well as outcomes identified and the impact of the self-study on members of the unit. A small sample of participants discussed their emerging understanding of self-study.

C. Contexts of the Self-Study

Unit self-study was carried out, not as an isolated, self-supporting activity, but as one part of a larger process within an institution of higher education. It was therefore couched in contexts wider than that prescribed by the very nature of the unit. The contexts surrounding the self-study were the nature of organizations, program review as an agent of change, the program review model adopted by the University of Alberta and the unit itself. Features of these four contexts are discussed below.

The Nature of Organizations

Organizational theorists hold differing views on the nature of organizations. Some view organizations as bureaucracies (Gouldner, 1959) which are hierarchically structured. Hierarchies give rise to differential distribution of power (Adelman & Alexander, 1981) with greatest power residing within the upper levels of the structure. Gouldner proposed the existence of two types of bureaucracy. One he referred to as representative bureaucracy in which authority derives from the knowledge and expertise of the individual. Within the representative bureaucracy, organizational rules are set collaboratively or bilaterally by the persons involved and "the rules are justified by the participants on the ground that they are means to desired ends, and persuasion and education are used to obtain compliance with them" (p. 403). The second type of bureaucracy is punishment-centred with authority being vested in the incumbent in office who determines organizational rules and enforces them through punishments. Organizations viewed in this manner are seen to have goals which are directed by the environment (Greenfield, 1973). Baldridge (1970) criticized this Weberian view of organizations as failing to explain political issues which make organizations dynamic, issues such as the role of power deriving from affective motives.

Others such as Katz and Kahn (1978) see organizations as social systems in which roles are defined, norms established and an organizational culture is a significant determinant of organizational action. Seen from this standpoint, organizations are geared to

maintain a state of homeostasis and utilize feedback as a means of stabilizing relationships with organizational goals being set in response to the environment (Greenfield, 1973). In both the bureaucratic and social system orientations, the organization is seen as an entity in itself, and as distinct from the individuals who operate within it.

A third characterization of organizations is as political entities (Baldridge, 1970). Drawing on the work of conflict theorists, and those addressing community power as well as interest groups in organizations, this model purports that the social system within organizations gives rise to the formation of interest groups. Each has its own goals and tries to influence organizational goals. The extent to which each interest group tries to advance its cause within the organization and succeeds is a measure of power within the organization and among the groups. The political model ascribes a proactive role to individuals in organizations. It is also premised on the notion of change as a key element in organizational life.

According to Ellstrom (1983), there is a fourth model of organization, the anarchistic model. Drawing on the work of Cohen and March as well as Weick, Ellstrom advanced that the anarchistic organization is characterized by goals that are unclear and variously defined, irrational or randomized modes of problem solving and decision making and weak links between elements of the organization.

Ellstrom (1983) attempted to integrate the four models of organizations pointing out that "different dimensions may be differently salient in different kinds of organizations (for example, schools and industrial organizations), in different parts or subsystems of the same organization, or even in the same subsystem at different points in time" (p. 237). According to him, each model operates under certain conditions and is guided by certain principles.

Greenfield (1985) proposed a different view of organizations, advocating that people make organizations rather than being acted upon by organizations. According to him,

> organizations are patterns for living, ways of seeing the world. They are designs for existence forged in the fire of life. They are the rules we choose to live by, they are also the rules which others have chosen for us and which we accept. Organizations are the meaning we find in our lives, regardless of how those meanings come to be there. The self cannot escape organization. Indeed, self *is* organization in a profound sense, though the self may behave and feel quite differently as it moves from organization to organization - from fragment to fragment of its personal world. (pp. 5241-5242)

These two significantly different views of the relationship between the individual and the organization circumscribe a different approach to life in organizations and may be espoused by different people within a single organization. Holding such opposite perspectives can lay the foundation for conflict within the organization and create an environment which is hostile to change.

Institutions of higher education are overtly structured, by and large, as bureaucracies with the attendant hierarchy and differential power system. Yet, as Ellstrom (1983) proposed, the possibility exists that subunits of the institutions can be organized differently, some bureaucratically, others as a social system, politically or anarchically. It is also possible that within a subunit, members conceptualize the organization of their subunit differently leading to a climate which is prone to conflict.

Regardless of one's overriding view on the nature of organizations, what is a reality is that they are pluralistic in nature. This plurality is evidenced both vertically within the institution as a whole (University Administration through Dean of Faculty and Head of Department to senior members of Faculty and Department to junior members of Faculty and Department) as well as within units of the institution and horizontally across disciplines. It also makes possible the existence of both representative and punishment-centred

bureaucracy within a single institution. As Adelman and Alexander (1982) pointed out, plurality renders these institutions seats of competing interests.

Harman (1989) advanced one conceptualization of the manner in which plurality within universities exists. Using commitment to the institution and commitment to research as the main dimensions of her emergent typology of academics, she proposed that there are four ideal types of academics. These are the research leaders who have high commitment to both the university and research, the individual scholars with high commitment to research and low commitment to the institution, artisans who have low commitment to research but high commitment to the institution and the drones with low commitment to research and the university. These four types have obvious interests and expectations of themselves and others.

Institutions of higher education are also organizations which serve the interests of several publics. The expectations of these publics vary according to their conceptualization of the function of the organization and their relationship with it. The interests and experiences of different constituents of an institution are likely to colour their understanding and interpretation of the requirements and possibilities of program review and self-study and make the conduct of true institutional self-study problematic.

Program Review as an Agent of Change

Conrad and Wilson (1985) noted that internal program review is probably the most utilized method of evaluation in institutions of higher education. Internally-motivated program review has increasingly been adopted as an approach to self-regulation because of the decline in resources and the need for accountability (Harcleroad, 1980). Bigsby and Davis (1989) noted that, in the case of institutions of higher education in British Columbia, "having credible program review processes was the most valid way to forestall the potential proliferation of external program accreditation" (p. p.p.7).

Many benefits of program review have been identified (Arns & Poland, 1980; Barak, 1982). Negative consequences have also been acknowledged (Kells, 1977; Seeley, 1981).

Casserly (1986), who examined institutional self-study in four libraries involved in accreditation activities, reported that in the two more successful self-studies there was "increased internal communications, better long-term planning, useful advice and recommendations, a variety of improvements in specific areas of library performance . . . also realized organizational and personal linkage and ownership benefits" (p. 40). Others have reported similar and other benefits from program review. For instance, these benefits were acknowledged: long range planning and setting of realistic expectations (Morell, 1979) and clarified goals, improved internal communication and improved rationale for use of resources (Feasley, 1980).

Kells (1977) claimed that traditional self-study is time-consuming, relies heavily on the commitment of Faculty and the efforts of the institution head and does not necessarily foster problem solving. Skolnik (1989) proposed that program review has the potential to promote conformity among academics. However, Montgomery (1989) stated that program review is still the best approach available to institutions of higher education in their attempt to bring about change in an orderly manner in their programs.

Different directions of change can be informed by program review at different levels of an organization. Improvement in the quality of programs and services (Barak, 1982; Dressel & Cammack, 1971; Johnson & Christal, 1985), promotion of institutional renewal (Bogue, 1980), facilitation of rational resource allocation (Barak, 1982; Zammuto, 1986) and informed decision making regarding program termination (Conrad & Wilson, 1985) are some of the outcomes which can be achieved. However, the most cogent purpose for the conduct of program review is program improvement (Arns & Poland, 1980; Feasley, 1980).

Barak (1982) raised the concern about the general nature of program improvement as the purpose of program review. He said that if faculty interpreted this to mean that resources will become available when the administration does not conceptualize it as such, this can become problematic. He emphasized the need for clarification of the purpose of program review.

Conrad and Wilson (1985) advised that the purpose of the program review should be clear and concise and that, where more than one purpose is specified, they should be compatible. They noted that the purpose informs the approach used and indicated that incompatibility among multiple purposes could lead to adoption of an approach which fails to accommodate those purposes. Nevo (1986) as well as Parlett and Dearden (1977) concurred that the purpose does give direction to the method of the evaluation and called for it to be clearly defined.

Casserly (1984), who examined the self-study process conducted as part of the accreditation process in 4 university libraries, identified 11 factors related to success. She recommended that emphasis should be placed on approach and planning factors such as commitment, motivation, leadership and design of the self-study, activity factors such as participation, openness, focus on goals and effectiveness and the use of user and expert opinion and organizational factors such as past experiences with self-study and planning processes, timing and group self-perception.

Harris (1984), also looking at self-study as part of the accreditation process, described 10 organizational and extra-organizational factors which influenced attainment of improved institutional effectiveness. The organizational factors included the commitment of the institution's leader, internal motivation, attention to process strategies, the hardship imposed and the quality of the self-study report.

Ziegahn (1989) found two constraints to successful internal evaluation, namely, separation of evaluation from program activities and the extra-organizational context. She

noted that success is related to factors such as support for internal evaluation within the organization, the organizational structure which affects both flow and processing of information and behaviour of the organization and the psychological climate.

Designed by administrators, internal program review is premised on the notion that the units of the institution and their members value the exercise in the same manner as its initiators. It requires persons who have functioned more frequently as evaluators of others to engage in an evaluation experience which necessitates their playing a different role. In the accustomed role, the control of the evaluation is in the hands of an "external evaluator," allowing the evaluator to maintain distance from the object of evaluation and limiting his/her personal involvement. As Seeley (1981) pointed out though, in the new role the evaluator experiences a change in status quo and may feel threatened by the exercise. Cochran and Hengstler (1984) reported that in an institution where an academic audit was introduced at a non-crisis time in the university's history, at the inception, there was dissonance between the purpose perceived by the participants and the actual, stated purpose. When the time and effort were taken to ensure that consensus on the purpose and design of the process had been achieved, the results were accepted and acted upon with little dissension.

Internally-motivated program review has been accepted as a viable phenomenon (Montgomery, 1989). Yet the question raised by Wildavsky (1972) of whether meaningful self-evaluation can be conducted by organizations is pertinent. Wildavsky suggested that evaluation and organizations might be incompatible since the requirements of the former are difficult to accommodate within the latter. He opined that evaluation connotes change and a relationship between action and objectives while organization suggests homeostasis and commitment. From his perspective, organizations are bureaucratic posing difficulties for accommodation of the requisites for change.

Adelman and Alexander (1981) concur that the ideal of a self-evaluating institution is difficult to achieve. They attributed the difficulty to the different locations of power

within a hierarchical structure. They posited that meaningful self-evaluation within organizations can be achieved if attention were paid to questions such as what purpose would be served, what would be the scope of the evaluation, how would information be gathered, who would undertake the evaluation and how widely would the results be disseminated. In their view,

> Evaluation serves to make visible underlying tensions and conflicts; and especially it challenges the reality of the basic principles on which academic life in such institutions claims to rest - "rationality," "democracy," "professionalism," "pursuit of excellence," "the furtherance of knowledge." What is identified in greater or lesser degrees, in our experience, is the extent to which such "principles" and especially the notions of "self-evaluation" or institutional "theorizing" can sometimes be little more than rhetoric. Moreover, while one might expect a public, corporate approach to evaluation to pose its most basic threat to the individual teacher, in practice what is most exposed is not so much the quality of individual action as of other sorts of corporate action - college management, course management, collective course planning: political realities rather than pedagogical frailties. (pp. 154 - 155)

Adelman and Alexander also noted that because of the pluralistic nature of institutions of higher education, competing interests exist. As a result, no matter what attempts are made to accommodate the multiple realities which exist, no evaluation report would please everybody.

The self-study process utilized at the University of Alberta was one which gave control of its implementation to the unit being studied. An exploration of this process should enable us to understand what influences the way people function within an evaluative setting, particularly one in which they are seen as being partners in the process.

It is the interpretation of the unit members of the administrators' decision to institute a self-study as a component of a program review process at a university and what influenced that interpretation within the broader institutional context which will be the focus of this study.

Program Review at the University of Alberta: Setting the Institutional Context

In 1978, the Board of Governors of the University of Alberta received a recommendation from the University Priorities Committee (UPC) that a system of reviews of academic programs, academic units and administrative and service units be established in the institution (University of Alberta, 1980). To implement this proposal, the President's Advisory Committee on Academic Reviews, later to be renamed the President's Advisory Committee on Campus Reviews (PACCR), was struck in 1980 (Enns, Harris, Jopling & Kreisel, 1986).

Designed "to seek ways of serving the public interest as effectively as possible" (Harris, cited in Enns, Harris, Jopling, & Kreisel, 1983, p. 1), program reviews at the University of Alberta were intended to be undergone by all academic and service units of the institution. That meant that no unit was exempt; no selection was forthcoming. In other words, once that administrative decision had been made, each unit would enter into the process at some point in time.

In its conceptualization of the program review process, the Academic Development Committee (ADC) stated that the University of Alberta would only reap the benefits of program review "if they are instituted in an effective and acceptable manner and only if the unit being evaluated has every opportunity to present its academic record in both teaching and research" (ADC, 1978, p. 5). The ADC was also concerned that the evaluation be seen to be fair and that the evaluators, in this case the members of the Unit Review Committee (URC), be persons who were recognized and respected. It also felt that the process should "stimulate each person within the unit to reflect upon the objectives of the unit in servicing the programs and society" (p. 5). It is of significance that the ADC recognized that impact of the program review process would not necessarily be observable, a factor which has implications for the interpretation of utilization and impact of evaluation results. In this vein, ADC stated that

> the major effects of academic evaluations may not be observable or, even when observed, reportable, and caution must be exercised in the evaluation procedures to insure that enhanced aspirations and expectations do not mislead the members of the unit into thinking that solutions to problems (administrative, financial, research, etc.) are at hand. (p. 5)

But what did this program review process entail? With its major focus being program improvement and being initially introduced at a non-crisis time of the university's history, the program review process was developed as a multi-stage process comprising distinct activities.

The first stage of the process entailed the conduct of a unit self-study, the findings of which were to be compiled in a report. The report was intended to paint a picture of the understanding of the unit of its history, current status, impending changes, strengths, weaknesses, limitations and future prospects. The second stage involved the visit of the Unit Review Committee generally consisting of two area specialists external to the university, one person from a related discipline or department and one person from the university-at-large. This committee was directed in its task thus:

> Without intending to restrict the scope of the review, we should like to have drawn to our attention what, in the opinion of the members of the Unit Review Committee, are the strengths and weaknesses of the department's teaching and research programs, and assessment of the staff and staff workloads, the adequacy of the resources provided, the effectiveness of the organization of the department, and the relations of the department with others. In particular, we should appreciate having drawn to our attention any opportunities the URC perceives for improving the department's programs, its relations with both internal and external organizations, and for better utilization of resources available. We also ask for your judgment of the department's proposed plans for the future. (PACCR, n.d., p. 5)

The URC during its visit had the opportunity to meet Faculty members and other constituents of the unit including students, either collectively or individually, thus gleaning a picture from diverse sources. The next phases saw the report of the URC being presented to the President, being sent to the unit for its response and steps being put in place for follow-up of the recommendations.

In the case of the University of Alberta, the program review process was consciously instituted, not as a "witch hunt" but as a non-crisis examination of the units in the university (Harris & Holdaway, 1983). While this non-crisis state existed at the inception of the program review process at the University of Alberta, the situation has changed over the years. By 1986, the university was faced with a decline in its financial health. As a result, the expectations of the program review process were altered. PACCR (1987) revealed the nature of the change.

> It is probably accurate to say that, in the early years of the PACCR process, departments judged the success of a review partly by the increased resources they managed to get, usually in the form of new positions. We have noticed a significant change in the last two or three years. As a result of the difficult financial situation the university faces, the expectations of departments are not what they used to be, although the President is still able to provide some help when a Review Committee has pointed to an urgent situation that needs immediate attention. What we have noticed is that departments are now much more aware that a PACCR review is part of a long-range process and that, properly used, the URC Report can play a major role in the program improvement. (pp. 2-3)

The model of program review adopted by the University of Alberta entailed units within the institution completing a self-study. Program review is an opportunity for a unit to work towards program improvement and for its members to determine the congruence between personal and institutional goals (Kells, 1983; Nordvall, 1982; Seeley, 1981). Whether a unit defines these as purposes of its self-study and holds the same values as the initiators of the process are among the factors which could influence the manner in which its members execute the self-study and the degree to which the self-study will be incisive or utilized. For, to the extent that the decision that each unit must undertake self-study is made by the institution's decision makers, the evaluation will be externally motivated.

Implications of the Program Review Model. The stated purpose of program review was program improvement. Barak (1982) noted that because the possibility existed that staff might interpret this to mean that resources were forthcoming when the administration did not have this as a necessary outcome, this general purpose should be clarified.

While program review was internally instituted by the university, the URC employed in the process was external to the units being evaluated. As Wilson (1987) noted, this influences the perspective held of the process within the unit.

The process was also seen as one which should stimulate reflection by all members of the unit. To achieve this, the unit would necessarily have to design its process to facilitate such reflection.

The Participating Unit: The Faculty of Nursing

To be able to examine the self-study phase of the program review process from the perspective of the participants, it was decided to choose one of the units of the University of Alberta which was in the process of completing its self-study. Each unit is likely to experience the process differently based partly on characteristics which are peculiar to it. Stake (1990) noted that "to understand an object is to understand both its common and unique features. We find an abundance of each. Our study may emphasize the common or the unique, the generalizable or the local; but in any successful study the common and unique will be clarified" (p. 231). It is to provide a background against which the context of the participating unit can be constructed, that is, features which are unique to the unit, that the following description of elements of the Faculty of Nursing is presented. The manner in which both the common and unique features of the unit were elements of the self-study become clear as the research findings are discussed.

The Faculty of Nursing was one of few non-departmentalized units at the University of Alberta. It was also a unit in which the Faculty members were primarily women.

The first nursing courses were offered by the University of Alberta in 1921. Two years later, the School of Nursing was established under the Faculty of Medicine. This relationship continued until 1966 when the School of Nursing became an autonomous entity within the university. The unit became the Faculty of Nursing in 1976.

Nursing within the University of Alberta system has grown from a few courses in public health nursing through a Bachelor of Science in Nursing cum Registered Nurse program along with specialized certificate and diploma programs to graduate level programs. The undergraduate program has been revised over the years while some certificate and diploma programs have been added, revised or terminated. A graduate program leading to a Masters in Nursing was approved in 1971 and introduced in 1975 while a PhD program, the first in Canada, was approved by the university administration in 1986. Implementation of both graduate programs was delayed due to unavailability of funds.

The Faculty was headed by a Dean. Two Associate Deans, one responsible for Graduate Education and Research Development and one responsible for Undergraduate Education provided guidance and support for the Faculty. The Research Facilitation Office and the Continuing Nursing Education Program were headed by Directors while the position of Clinical Coordinator was established in 1986 with the role being integrated into that of Coordinator, Undergraduate Student Affairs in 1987.

The Dean of the Faculty was in the fifth year of a five-year term of office during the 1986-1987 academic year, the period during which the self-study was conducted. A new Dean was scheduled to take office during the next academic year.

As of January 1987, the staff comprised 44 continuing appointments, 12 full-time sessional appointments and 24 part-time sessional appointments, all but 1 being female. Of the 44 continuing appointments, 19 held doctoral degrees while the remainder held masters degrees. Of the 25 with masters degrees, 10 were involved in doctoral study, 2 were scheduled to begin theirs while 5 were investigating doctoral programs. It was noted that

> this level of preparation is very much needed for the Faculty of Nursing to accomplish the goals that have been established, particularly for increasing research endeavours, expanding graduate enrollment and establishing a PhD in Nursing program, the first in Canada. (Faculty of Nursing, 1987, p. 8)

There were 16 committees established within the Faculty. The number of committees and the size of some of them were reduced in the previous five years "in order to decrease demands on faculty time and free up more time for research and scholarly endeavours" (Faculty of Nursing, 1987, p. 9).

The programs offered within the Faculty required students to gain extensive clinical experience. In order to effect this component of the programs, the Faculty of Nursing has had to compete for clinical placements with four other nursing programs in the city of Edmonton. In addition, the requirement results in significant increases in Faculty workload.

The Faculty of Nursing was housed in two buildings, the Clinical Sciences building which was shared with the Faculty of Medicine and the Garneau Professional Centre in which offices were leased.

Nursing has traditionally been a non-academic field which has existed in the shadow of medicine. Its history within the University of Alberta has been closely linked to the Faculty of Medicine. It has also traditionally been an occupation pursued by women and continues to be so. Within the university community, Faculty members are bound by the tenets of academe, those of teaching, research and scholarly activity as well as those of practice seen as clinical experiences.

D. Focus of the Present Research

This research addressed the experience of conducting a self-study as part of a larger program review process in one unit of an institution of higher education. It examined how the self-study evolved within the unit and what it meant to and for selected members of that unit.

While the focus of the research was self-study, it must be recognized that the process was coloured by the character of the unit itself. It is expected that no two units would approach the exercise in the same manner yet some similarities would exist only if these were limited to the content areas addressed as delineated by PACCR.

E. Overview of the Thesis

The first chapter sets the context of the research, describing the need for and the purpose of the research, the institutional, evaluation and unit contexts and the focus of the research. Chapter 2 describes the method used in the conduct of the research while Chapter 3 presents the conceptualization of self-study as addressed in the literature, as viewed by the University of Alberta and evidenced by the model used and as viewed by members of the unit itself. In Chapters 4 and 5 the process and product of the self-study as described by participants, their experiences of the process and their response to key elements in conducting unit self-study are presented. Chapter 6 addresses factors which characterize nursing in general and in this academic setting in particular and their relationship to self-study. Factors influencing the conduct of true, in-depth and meaningful self-study and the requisite conditions as well as conclusions and implications of the research are discussed in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 2

Searching for Meaning

A. Introduction

The search for meaning of the experience of others involved in a specific series of events called for establishment of a reciprocal relationship between myself and the participants who were being asked to describe their experience. It also called for assumption of a stance which allowed the participants as the "experiencers" to communicate that meaning in a manner with which they were comfortable. At the same time, I was faced with the task of contextualizing what was communicated in the hope of limiting distortions of that essential meaning. In an attempt to arrive at the meaning of unit self-study for members of the Faculty of Nursing within the University of Alberta, I used a research approach which allowed me to paint a picture of a unit's experience of constructing and telling its own story.

This chapter addresses the manner in which and the reasons why I approached the task of locating the meaning which the self-study phase of the program review process had for selected members of one unit in the University of Alberta. It describes the approaches to the study as espoused by naturalistic enquiry, the case study method and qualitative data, the appropriateness of their adoption for investigating the research issues, the requirements for entering the unit, data sources, collection and analysis, means of establishing trustworthiness of the data and some political and ethical concerns.

B. Naturalistic Enquiry

As Parlett and Dearden (1977) noted, the problem defines the method of investigation. For that reason, I used a qualitative approach to examine the dynamics of the self-study phase of the program review process in the participating unit. More specifically, I adopted a naturalistic mode of enquiry because it lent itself more readily to the object of study.

In describing the qualitative approach, Bogdan and Biklen (1982) noted that the natural setting is the direct source of data, the researcher is the key instrument, the study is descriptive focusing more on the process than simply on outcomes or products and holds "meaning" as an essential concern. These features are applicable to this research.

The mode of naturalistic enquiry encompasses the case study method, relies heavily on qualitative data but more significantly espouses axioms which define the phenomena of study. Guba and Lincoln (1981) articulated five axioms of naturalistic enquiry which relate to the nature of reality, the relationship between the enquirer and the respondents, the nature of truth statements, the attribution/explanation of action and the role of values in the enquiry. The propositions in the literature and how the tenets of naturalistic enquiry were manifested in this research are discussed below.

Reality. Multiple realities exist and the study of them diverges, yielding more questions than answers yet leading to a deeper level of understanding. The implication for this research was that participants held individual perspectives which, when shared with me, caused me to identify other questions which were posed to other participants. This gave direction to the research and allowed creation of a picture of the whole viewed from many stances. It also facilitated identification of context-bound elements of the experience and those more generic to the conduct of evaluation.

Enquirer-respondent relationship. The interaction between the enquirer and the respondent results in mutual influence. The interaction which developed during the research was one which caused me, as researcher, not only to pose questions to the participants but also to question my understanding of what I was attempting as well as what I was learning based on the responses and questions of the participants. My presence in the participants' environment caused some of them to examine, for the first time as far as they could recall, some of the implications of the experience. In one instance, a participant

suggested that I might discover some understanding of the Faculty which would contribute to improvement of some aspect of Faculty functioning.

Nature of truth statements. The enquiry is intended to yield an idiographic body of knowledge, knowledge that is grounded through a series of working hypotheses. Transferability from situation to situation rather than generalizability can be achieved. Participants shared their understandings which lead to an appreciation of the process of self-study in a particular unit yet giving an indication of possibilities for self-study in other settings.

Attribution/explanation of action. Any action may be explainable in terms of multiple interacting factors, events and processes. The self-study was found to be influenced by a number of factors, no one being identified as a primary influence. The significance of the multifaceted nature of self-study as evidenced in the participating unit is explored in this research.

The role of values in enquiry. The values of the enquirer, the research paradigm, the context among other factors influence the enquiry. The choice of the research problem, exploration of self-study, was influenced by a personal interest in understanding the possibility of internal evaluators effectively conducting an evaluation. Believing that an exercise such as self-study could foster an attitude of collaboration and constructive change through self-understanding, I embarked on this research. Through engagement with the participants and the data, I learnt of the factors which influence self-study, some of them being context bound.

Using a naturalistic mode of enquiry allowed investigation of phenomena over which I had no control. The self-study and the perspectives of that phenomenon resided with the participants. It also accommodated emergence of and gave credence to the context in which the research is embedded. Participants therefore brought their own meaning, not

only to the phenomenon under study (the self-study) but also to the interaction between themselves and me.

C. The Case Study Method

Anderson, Ball, Murphy and Associates (1975) described a case study as "an intensive, detailed analysis and description of a single organism, institution, or phenomenon in the context of its environment" (p. 46). For Fairchild (1970), the case study method is

> the method used in social research whereby data are collected and studied which depict any phase of a, or an entire life process of a unit in its various interrelationships and in its cultural setting. The unit studied may be a person, a family, a social group, a societal institution, a community or a nation. In contrast to the statistical method, the case study method gives a more or less continuous picture through time of the experience, social forces and influences to which the unit has been subjected. (pp. 32-33)

In a case study, the description and analysis may take place longitudinally (Spirer, 1980), may be comprehensive in nature taking place over a relatively short space of time (Yin, 1984), may use qualitative data only, quantitative data only or comprise a combination of the two.

This research, a descriptive and interpretive case study conducted over an eight-month period of time, used interview data as its primary source. It focused on questions which sought to discover how and why the self-study in the Faculty of Nursing evolved, developed and was concluded, criteria which Spirer (1980) and Yin (1984) considered appropriate for the conduct of case study research. Secondly, the fact that the knowledge about dynamics of self-study are rather limited justified the method chosen (Leininger, 1985). Thirdly, Patton (1982) and Yin opined that this method is suitable when the researcher has no control over the events of the study and focuses on contemporary events.

D. Identifying and Entering the Unit

When I had identified my research interest, it was brought to my attention that the Faculty of Nursing was engaged in its self-study. At that time, the Faculty was planning

the activity. I wrote to the Ethics Review Committee of that Faculty seeking permission to conduct a case study of their self-study. The Committee considered the research proposal and requested clarification of issues such as what would happen to the tapes during the study and after the study was completed and whether participants had the right to ask questions. In addition, they suggested changes to aspects of the study such as inclusion of my Supervisor's name and telephone number on the consent form and, implicitly, use of less than fifteen participants as I had intended. At this time, I was informed that the permission of each Faculty member would be needed before I could proceed with the study.

After I had responded to the queries raised by the Ethics Review Committee, approval was given to conduct the research in the Faculty of Nursing. I was also informed that the decision requiring permission of each Faculty member had been reversed. The new decision required me to seek the permission of participants only. A list of the suggested names of persons considered suitable to participate in the study was provided by the Ethics Review Committee. All persons suggested had contributed to the writing of the draft self-study report.

The entire process of negotiation lasted approximately two months. Another six weeks elapsed between the time that permission to proceed with the study was granted and the conduct of the first interview since interviews had to be arranged at the convenience of the participants. As a result, I was able to enter the unit at a point when the draft report had been written and reviewed by the Faculty at large.

The Ethics Review Committee recognized that it was exposing the unit to perceptions of an outsider and commented on the fact that no mention had been made in the proposal of the potential impact of the study on the Faculty. This consideration helped me focus on the political and ethical realities of the interaction between the participants and myself.

E. The Primary Participants

The primary participants consisted of nine members of staff of the Faculty of Nursing. Of these, seven had been actively involved in the preparation of the self-study report. They were selected from the list provided by the Ethics Review Committee. The other two were involved in providing information solicited by working groups and had participated in the retreat. Only one of the participants had not attended the retreat at which the draft self-study report was discussed. Two participants had worked in the Faculty for less than one year, three had worked for one to three years while the remaining four had served at least four years. Four were members of the Executive Committee of the Faculty of Nursing Council. Eight held doctoral degrees while the ninth was in the process of completing hers.

F. The Secondary Participants

The secondary participants consisted of one member of PACCR and three members of the university administration. The representative of PACCR was a vital source of data on the historical and practical perspectives of the program review process, facilitating my exposure to the phases of the process, both from an administrative stance and a unit stance. Members of the university administration provided a picture of the developmental phases of the program review process, their perceptions of its possibilities and their expectations of the process.

G. Data Collection

Data were collected primarily through interviews and from documents provided by the Faculty of Nursing and PACCR. These were supplemented by my observations of participant behaviour and my intuition during the interviews.

Interviews. Interviews were conducted with nine primary participants from the Faculty of Nursing, one member of PACCR and three members of the university administration. The interviews with primary participants were recorded on audiotapes

while those with secondary participants were not. One interview was held with each of three primary participants, two with five participants and three with one participant. One interview was held with each of two members of the university administration, while the interaction with the member of PACCR and the third member of the university administration was a recurring interchange.

The purpose of the study was explained to each of the primary participants when she was invited to be involved in the research. Questions were entertained and answered prior to and during the interviews. All but one Faculty of Nursing staff approached agreed to participate in the study and signed the consent form (see Appendix 1 for the consent form).

Although a number of questions were generated prior to the start of the research based on a preliminary review of the literature, interviews were discursive in nature. Generally, participants were first asked to talk about their involvement in and perceptions of the self-study process. As interviews progressed, issues which emerged were pursued. These were then raised in subsequent interviews with the same and other participants.

Documents. Pertinent documents were collected from PACCR, the Faculty of Nursing and the university administration. These consisted of the guidelines prepared for units undergoing review, Annual Reports of PACCR, other PACCR and related publications, excerpts of minutes of university committees, the Faculty of Nursing general Faculty meetings, Faculty Council and Executive Committee meetings (see Appendix 2), the organizational assignment of subcommittees, Faculty of Nursing publications and the self-study report of the unit. These documents helped in framing the contexts within which the self-study was conducted as well as providing vital data on the self-study process and product. A list of documents is provided in Appendix 3.

H. Data Analysis

Interviews. The audiotaped interviews served as the primary data source for explication of the understanding of each participant of the nature of the self-study undertaken by the unit. I transcribed in long hand excerpts of the interviews which I considered pertinent to an understanding of the self-study process and product. These I entered in computer files facilitating transfer of selected extracts to the final report of this research. As I listened to the audiotapes and examined the transcripts, I noted themes which emerged during conversations. These I tested in later conversations. At the completion of the interviews, I read and re-read the transcripts in an attempt to confirm and disconfirm the categories identified. I compiled an initial list of 26 categories which reflected the process used in conducting of the self-study, the participants' experiences of the self-study and issues which were related to self-study though not consciously an integral of the process or the experience.

Next, I examined each transcript noting beside participant verbalizations the category or categories which were covered therein. I then compiled an index of quotations by category which facilitated the next step in the process of analysis.

In order to better "see" the picture which was emerging, I built a sub-file for each category comprising the words of the participants which I had indexed. During this process I recategorized some of the participants' expressed understandings as I gained a sense of the whole from reading the transcripts. Engagement with the data allowed me to pull together common threads and identify dispersion in perspective. This step allowed further refinement of the story which was being told by the participants in the Faculty of Nursing.

The next step entailed grouping the categories into four broader clusters which were related to conceptualization of self-study, a description of the process used in the unit and the product, the nature of the experience of conducting self-study and issues which

characterized the unit itself and reflected a continuation of the process of self-study revealing elements which were difficult to capture in the self-study report.

I continued to use the audiotapes while preparing this document to enable expansion of quotations and as an attempt to minimize the possibility of misrepresenting the intent conveyed through the vocalizations of the primary participants.

Transcribing the conversations myself, though a relatively tedious process, allowed me to become very familiar with the data and the nuances in the spoken words. In addition, it helped me to recall elements of the interaction which are difficult or impossible to capture on audiotape or even in written words.

I. Confidentiality

I had offered to guarantee confidentiality of the information provided by the primary participants. In an attempt to honour my word, I transcribed the conversations. I have also used assumed names in referring to the participants and have deliberately refrained from identifying them by length of service or academic qualifications. Any association which can be made between verbatim contributions and participants is unintentional. I have also refrained from using descriptions of programs or activities which could be traced to particular individuals within the Faculty of Nursing.

I have named the seven primary participants who were involved in writing the draft report Andrea, Daisy, Ethel, Frances, Lesley, Meryl and Theresa. I referred to the other two participants as Nancy and Zoe.

I have identified the quotes selected for inclusion in this document by the month and day of the interview and the page number or numbers in the transcript. For example, I have used the system 7/29/5 to denote an interview conducted on July 29 and a quote which appeared on page 5 of the transcript. In cases where more than one interview was conducted on the same day, the sequence of the interview was indicated in parentheses, for example, 8/12(2)/11, denoting the second interview held on August 12.

J. Trustworthiness

Major concerns in the conduct of research are how credible are the data collected, to what extent do they reflect reality and has the essence of truth been captured during the research process and communicated in the final reporting of that investigation. Guba (1979) and Guba and Lincoln (1981) have articulated means of ensuring trustworthiness which guided but did not circumscribe these concerns in this research.

The presence of multiple perspectives in the participating unit, on one hand, made adherence to the truth problematic. For, as Adelman (1984) pointed out, multiple realities make it difficult to satisfy everyone even if an attempt is made to be just and fair in the presentation and interpretation of that truth. On the other hand, it has challenged me to give credence to the words and actions of the individuals with whom I interacted as well as the contents of the documents which I perused. In order, therefore, to let the participants speak for themselves, I relied heavily on their own words as I commented on the process and product of self-study couched in the wider program review process in the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Alberta. I also extracted sections of documents as appropriate and, in a few instances, reproduced in its entirety the information available to me. I have included a selection of these in Appendix 2.

In an attempt to achieve credibility, I employed triangulation of the data, using the sources of two levels of primary participants, more specifically those involved in writing the report and those who were not, and documents available from PACCR as well as the unit itself. The self-study report served to confirm some of the statements heard as well as to provide evidence of the context in which the self-study was completed. In addition, issues which emerged during the conversations were raised and discussed with subsequent participants.

Potential primary participants were identified by the Ethics Review Committee. While this list consisted of persons who were involved in preparation of parts of the self-

study report, I recognized the need to move beyond this insulated group. Therefore, two participants who were full-time members of the staff of the Faculty but who were not involved in writing sections of the self-study report were included in the sample. In fact, participants represented those who were involved in drafting sections of the report, those involved in finalizing the report and those whose major involvement occurred during the retreat. The use of the actual words of the participants grounded in the contexts enveloping the unit and its members facilitated identification of what Stake (1990) referred to as the common and unique elements in the self-study. This has enabled me to isolate what is considered germane to the unit and to go beyond this specific case and propose a more general understanding of the dynamics of self-study, and indeed, evaluation in a broader sense.

The existence of multiple realities laid the foundation for the presence of competing perspectives. This reality could be interpreted as making the data unstable. However, the availability of the interviews recorded on audiotape, the transcripts and evolutionary charts of themes and categories would allow retracing of the steps in arriving at the understanding of self-study in the unit. These features should ensure dependability of the data.

The decision on what to include and what to exclude was a complex one. Believing that if one person holds a position, it has currency for that person and, maybe, should be taken seriously influenced the manner in which I interacted with the data. There were very few instances where there was a lone voice among the primary participants. While some issues were more resonant than others and made their presence felt among the ones finally included in this document, others had to be weighed for their potency to the evolving picture and story. I believe that the themes and categories explored reflect one circumscribing reality of nine expressed realities of self-study in the Faculty of Nursing. In other words, despite my attempt to enter the research arena with as open a mind as possible, my own understandings are influential in this case study. Nevertheless, by

providing contextual features of the self-study and relying on the voices of participants, I believe that I have effectively represented the key features of self-study in the participating unit.

K. Political and Ethical Considerations

The decision made by the Ethics Review of the Faculty of Nursing to grant me entry to the Faculty was one which allowed me to engage in an investigation in which I was interested. It was also one which made the members of that unit and the unit itself vulnerable to my integrity and research skills. This measure of trust, whether it was initially viewed as such or not, presented me with challenges some of which I had never faced before or, at least, had never considered myself as having faced.

For the first time, I was placed in a position where the relationship between myself as researcher and the primary participants as informants made me vulnerable as well. I had agreed to establish a relationship with nine other persons upon whom I was dependent for the data which I needed. I had also given the participants the assurance that their identity would not be disclosed at any time, that they could withdraw or refuse to answer any questions without penalty, that they had the right to request that any contributions made be withheld and that they had the right to ask me any questions which pertained to the research. In other words, the participants had been given a major share of power and control over what had essentially been considered "my" study.

One challenge was therefore to try to establish a relationship which was comfortable, firstly, to the participants, and secondly, to me. Except for the first two interviews, interaction took place in an atmosphere with which both persons appeared to be comfortable. On two occasions, the participants told me to turn off the tape recorder. One asked questions related to my conduct of the study and the other sought clarification of question I had asked.

Another challenge centred around my ability to represent and not misrepresent the understandings which the participants had shared with me. Attempting to construct a mosaic from the data available to me, I was conscious of the possibility of taking essential messages too literally and out of context, practices which Elliot (1984) advocated should be avoided. To counter this, I have provided contextual frameworks and used verbatim contributions from the participants to assist in this endeavour. Additionally, I have revisited the recorded interviews to recapture the nuances of the interchange which were absent from the transcripts.

A third challenge related to the dissemination of the data available. While I had agreed to erase the tapes upon completion of the research, by that time I would have compiled a document which, if adjudged acceptable, would be made public. I have felt constrained by the commitment which I gave the participants and by the understanding by PACCR that the self-study report and other related documents would be made available to a limited audience. Guided by the method I had selected, I strove to represent as accurately as possible the understanding which I gleaned, relying on the words of the participants.

CHAPTER 3

The Nature of Self-Study

A. Introduction

Evaluation is by its very nature a political process (Adelman, 1984; Cochran & Hengstler, 1984; House, 1973), one which is oriented towards promoting change. Within institutions which are themselves seats of political activity, evaluation takes many forms such as student selection, course evaluation and faculty promotion, each giving control for its implementation and interpretation to persons other than those evaluated. Self-study, whether implemented as self-evaluation of an entire institution or as one component of program review in single units of an institution, has the potential to give much control to those who are being evaluated.

This chapter focuses on the conceptualization of self-study as examined in the literature, as indicated by PACCR and as evidenced in the participating unit.

B. Self-Study as Viewed in the Literature

The overriding purpose of program review and self-study is program improvement (Arns & Poland, 1980). This general purpose can be achieved through many approaches (Dressel & Cammack, 1971; Kells, 1988). Kells (1977) criticized the traditional model of self-study in which the exercise is organized by a central committee. He proposed an alternate model which included a non-traditional feature of using work groups which enabled participation by a wide range of constituents. He also suggested that problems should be identified early in the process and steps taken to address them. In the case of unit self-study, Bigsby and Davis (1989) noted that the unit itself is often expected to design its approach.

Holdaway (1990) reported that many participants in an evaluation of the program review process at the University of Alberta considered the self-study report to be its most beneficial part. Feasley (1980) and Poulton (1978) said that self-study is most useful for

the unit itself. This, however, depends on a number of factors which have been found to be influential in the conduct of useful and meaningful self-studies and program reviews.

One such factor is whether the evaluation is seen to be internally or externally motivated. Self-study seen as externally motivated defines the audience as an entity outside the unit, influences the questions asked and the countenance of the self-study report. Chambers (1984) stated that if the self-study is interpreted as being externally motivated, the unit loses an opportunity to engage in self-appraisal which is vital for enhancement of program quality.

Though some consider unit self-study conducted as part of university-instituted program review as internally-motivated evaluation, Wilson (1987) deemed these to be externally motivated. This leads to a difference in perspective. Wilson noted that unit reviews are

> necessarily intrusive, disrupting the routines of a department, demanding the collection of many data, and, on occasion, raising critical issues that may leave disturbances and division in their wake. . . . The department itself, while acknowledging in principle the desirability of such periodic stock-taking, may be unenthusiastic about the actual operation. Perhaps it is not paradoxical that it is the better departments that view such an effort as worth the candle and exert themselves to bring it off. (pp. 238 - 239)

It is apparent that objectivity is valued in the practice of evaluation. Nevo (1986) stated that internal evaluations are less objective and credible than external evaluations. Conrad and Wilson (1985) noted that the value of incorporating the services of an external review committee was that this brought objectivity and credibility to the evaluation endeavour. But the value of some degree of subjectivity is also recognized. Conrad and Wilson pointed out that "the tradition of internal self-evaluation is founded on the belief that program faculty best know the strengths and limitations of the program" (p. 17). As Fetterman (1991) noted, "an individual's subjective perception of reality may or may not coincide with the stated institutional view of reality, but it has its own validity, and the individual will act according to that perception -- with real consequences" (p. 1). What this

means is that the person or persons most intimately involved with the object of evaluation and who are most likely to determine the use made of the results of the evaluation have an opportunity to shape its development. Adelman and Alexander (1982) proposed that self-study can combine elements of external detachment and internal insights while still minimizing or balancing group and individual interests.

Johnson and Christal (1985) said that self-study should be an on-going practice and an integral facet of an institution's self-consciousness. They noted though that if self-study is considered as an externally-motivated experience rather than one aimed at improving internal planning and effectiveness, then self-study would continue to be sporadic and ineffective.

The approach to self-study has been found to be another significant factor in enabling in-depth self-examination. Cochran and Hengstler (1984) found that at the inception of an academic audit, participants were suspicious of the intents of the process. By attending to this concern, spending time to ensure that fears had been allayed, participants came to accept the process, participated in its design and, becoming owners of the activity, responded favourably to the results. Others, such as Conrad and Wilson (1985) and Mortimer and McConnell (cited in Zammuto, 1986), concurred that commitment to the process through a clear understanding of its intent is a crucial element.

More effective self-studies have also been found to result when all constituents have had an opportunity to contribute to the design and implementation of the self-study (Bigsby & Davis, 1989; Zammuto, 1986). Such a strategy is likely to be more meaningful. Morell (1979) criticized evaluators for failing to recognize the existence of multiple perspectives in organizations and the effect this phenomenon has on the relevance of the process for the organization's members.

Self-studies vary in scope and depth. The scope of a comprehensive self-study was delineated by Dressel and Cammack (1971). They suggested that such a self-study should encompass

> definition or clarification of purposes and goals; examination of the adequacy of physical and financial resources; appraisal of the quality, morale, and activities of the faculty; review of strengths and weaknesses of current curriculum organization and of instructional methods; consideration of the campus climate or environment - role of students and their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with programs and services; and collection of evidence on the effectiveness of educational program and processes in fostering student development. (p. 275)

These aspects of organizational life are important to the determination of the appropriateness of the institution's programs. Coverage of all would require a large amount of time and commitment which is one of the criticisms levelled against self-study (Wilson, 1987).

One of the potential outcomes of unit self-study is that of narrowing the gap between institutional and individual goals (Kells, 1983). Yet, if Dressel's (1976) position is accepted and internalized, then reaction to self-study is likely to be negative. Dressel stated that "evaluation both promises and threatens, both are essentials to its success. If no one is threatened, the evaluation is not sufficiently penetrating, and if it holds no promise to anyone of decisions leading to improvement, it is a waste of resources" (p. 10). From this perspective, it seems that to protect the individual, evaluation, in this case unit self-study may be construed as an objective exercise.

Zammuto (1986) mentioned that self-study could facilitate the fit between academic programs and institution mission. On the other hand, Brookes and German (1983) stated that with the increasing decline in university budgets, faculty workloads increased while the real value of salaries has decreased creating a climate for increase in the gap between the goals of Faculty and those of the institution. The reality of the latter situation makes self-study problematic.

Another potential outcome of self-study is an increase in the consciousness of program participants concerning what they are doing and what they ought to be doing (Arns & Poland, 1980).

Torbert (1981b) proposed that the threat in evaluation could be reduced if the purpose is clearly understood and if it becomes an ongoing process. Torbert (1976) suggested that "an organization member will feel less tension and contradiction as he or she increasingly succeeds in formulating a single aim which interpenetrates an organization's activities, giving them meaning in relation to one another rather than simply as means to some external end" (p. 81).

Johnson (1988) noted that

> it is not clear that the self-study process will do much to lessen faculty fears of lost autonomy. The best that can be hoped for is that in the process of self-study newer and better internal procedures and practices will evolve. When a self-study is truly a self-examination and self-correcting solutions are proposed, then change may be possible. If the self-study is a mechanism for change imposed from outside the department, it will be viewed with resentment and passive compliance will result. (p. 121)

There is no doubt that self-study, like the broader evaluation process program review, is an expensive process, expensive in both financial and temporal terms. It is however expected that the investments will be worth the expense if the ultimate goal of program improvement is achieved.

C. Self-Study as Viewed by the President's Advisory Committee on Campus Reviews

PACCR adopted a strategy in initiation of the unit's self-study which allowed the unit much latitude in its implementation. According to Harris (cited in Enns, Harris, Jopling, & Kreisel, 1983), "the instructions . . . are more global than specific. To obtain the maximum in the positive sense, the department is asked to open up both to itself and to the review team. . . . Each department is asked to tell its story" (p. 5).

The self-study report is the vehicle through which the unit tells its story to the outside world. However, the self-study process is where the story is created. PACCR,

though recognizing the linkages, saw a clear distinction between the self-study process and the self-study report. It described the self-study thus:

> During the Self-Study such aspects as history, current status, pending changes, future prospects, strengths, and limitations of the department should be critically examined. How the discussions on these topics are organized is for the department to decide. Possibly a good base for discussing any pending changes and future prospects is to use a draft of the history of the department as prepared by one or two members and a draft statement of the current status assembled by a few members. As many as possible should take an active role in examining future prospects.
>
> The most work will likely be required for the statement of current status. Without doubt the most difficult section is that dealing with the future. This will require a good deal of thought and discussion and is the most important.
>
> In general, the focus should be on key issues, a frank and balanced consideration of both strengths and areas for improvement, and strategies proposed for future changes and commitments for such changes. The roles that individuals or groups will assume to accomplish these changes should be agreed to. The experience in other universities and here is that the most successful studies are those that involve a majority of members of a department. (PACCR, n.d., p. 1)

These broad guidelines permitted each unit to proceed towards fulfilling its obligation in whatever manner it deemed fit. No doubt, PACCR considered this strategy to be appropriate for implementation within this university community. In describing the report of the self-study, PACCR stated that

> Out of the Self-Study is produced a report that serves as the primary document for the Unit Review Committee. The report should be well organized, clearly written, complete and yet concise. It should not reflect a total preoccupation with its preparation but it should arise out of a serious, mature self-examination. The quality of the report will probably be enhanced if a small steering group is responsible for its preparation and drafts are circulated to members for comment. (n.d., p. 2)

Implications of the Model. The model of program review used by the University of Alberta was specific in the steps of the process but vague in its purpose. Two messages were conveyed. Its intention of giving free rein with operationalization of the self-study process and production of a report was tempered by subtle directions with regard to the

scope and possible modes of organization of the process. These, I contend, made the self-study phase of the program review problematic.

The purpose addressed the notion of "public interest." This raises questions such as which public is being addressed, what is the role of the "public" in the self-study process and whether the results of the process would be disseminated to the "public."

Another issue which emerges is the manner in which the guidelines given by PACCR for engaging in the process were interpreted by the units within the university. It is most likely that individual units would have approached the process differently.

D. Self-Study as Viewed By Participants

The conceptualization of the self-study as viewed by the participants was gleaned through their definition of its purpose, their definition of "self" and the audiences of the self-study as identified by the participants.

Purpose of the Self-Study. The decision of the university administration to introduce the system of program reviews in the university was one which had much significance for the units. The entire process was intended to result in program improvement. The Academic Development Committee indicated that the self-study was a mechanism intended to give each unit an opportunity to present its academic record. For the members of the Faculty of Nursing, the purpose was variously defined if it was defined at all.

There seemed to be an interpretation of the purpose of the self-study which said that the self-study was a given, something that had to be done. The fact that this activity was designed by the administration seemed to be adequate as a purpose for some; others saw it as an opportunity to engage in self-evaluation, to assist in resource allocation or to enable program improvement. Daisy noted, "The purpose was clear to us why we were having a PACCR review. We had to have one. That was the message that we had to do it and so we were doing it. I think after we got into the process and actually at the point of

reviewing the draft report we could see that there were benefits to the Faculty" 6/10/3. Zoe said, "Purpose? This was the time. Every Faculty does it, so we do it. Seems like that wouldn't be enough. Think the purpose has gotten lost somewhere. If I was to say what is the purpose of the self-study, I'd say it would be something other than what has happened so I'm not sure if the purpose was there at the beginning or not" 7/22/10.

From Ethel's perspective, the self-study was seen as an opportunity to engage in self-reflection: "The whole idea of self-study is to be introspective and look at where you are and you have to look back at where you came from, and you say this is where we are and you project where you'd like to go. Now that's part of the process that goes on all the time" 6/4/4.

For Theresa, the purpose of the self-study was to assist in resource allocation: "My observation has been that most of these other departments have been trying to gain more resources and new staff and that sort of thing. Presumably that's the general purpose of the PACCR review [to look at how existing resources can be more effectively utilized]" 5/21(1)/2.

For some participants, there was a clear sense of the self-study being a vehicle for program improvement. Asked whether there were any other purposes possible for the unit, Ethel said,

> Well I think sometimes you identify certain gaps or things like especially in curriculum. We do this all the time in the study of curriculum, in curriculum committee. And we're constantly reviewing courses. But you have to look at the whole. Sometimes there may be things that you're missing or you're not emphasizing enough, or you may have repetition that's not necessary. 6/4/7

It is evident, however, that there was no consensus on the purpose of the self-study. Neither was PACCR's purpose clear to Faculty members when the process was initiated nor did the Faculty attempt to define its own purpose. As Lesley commented, PACCR's expectation of the exercise and responsibilities of members of the Faculty were not clear to her at the inception. As a result, the purpose was plurally defined and laid the

foundation for the multiple realities which exist in any organization to colour the interpretation and expectations of the process. Because of different levels of involvement in the exercise, purposes were perceived as ranging from program improvement which coincided with that stated by PACCR to Zoe's view. She said, "I think the self-study was to present us in the best possible light to what we think they're looking for. I guess I feel a little careful saying that as I don't want to be misquoted, but I think the process was more an exercise to present the Faculty as dealing with any problems that we have rather than dealing with the problems" 7/22/2.

Self-Study: Collective and/or Individual Self-Evaluation? The conceptualization of the self-study is an important part of the process. It helps to define the focus and scope of the exercise as well as to set the stage for current and future impact of the experience and findings. Noting that the needs of the institution and personal interests of its members can be accommodated in the self-study, I chose to examine the manner in which participants defined "self" in this process. Interestingly, members of the Faculty of Nursing considered "self" to be primarily the unit.

> Theresa: I think it is a study of the Faculty as a whole. Certainly the individuals make a big difference, the collection of individuals, in the quality of the effort but essentially it's a study of the Faculty. 7/29/1
>
> Meryl: It seems to me that the focus of the PACCR review was on the program and professional activities, publications, money brought into the Faculty from research grants and so on. It's a very objective exercise. 5/28/2
>
> Ethel: The self-study gets at "what do we want to do about these programs? Do we anticipate any new programs, do we anticipate major changes?" 6/4/4
>
> Daisy: I think for me it was more collectively [for] ourselves than [for] an individual because the report doesn't contain too much pertaining to individual Faculty. I looked upon it as where we should be going in the Faculty not where I should be going. Certainly there were little things that I thought about, for instance, having heard about things, ideas and what not that came out, I thought, "Oh, that's useful for me personally in my personal teaching or personal research or in my personal work." But I did not view it as a personal evaluation. My major thoughts about PACCR were that we really are a unified Faculty looking at what we ought to be doing and what we've done and I think that that's a helpful way to do it because then you don't get into individual blame. The whole approach wasn't one

> to isolate some individual who had not done well. It was what we were doing as a Faculty. . . . The greater picture for me at least was not looking upon myself as to what I could do tomorrow to change but rather of what we should do as a Faculty to change the program. 6/10/3

> Lesley: I looked at it as a Faculty self-study, a group self-study rather than an individual process. I don't remember in our group discussion anyone saying, "Gee, I'm not sure where I fit in in all this." 6/26/1

The perception of the self being the Faculty and not the individual was very evident. There was a clear demarcation in the minds of participants between the process of self-evaluation of the unit and that self-evaluation as performed by members of the Faculty. This raised the question of where individual self-evaluation fit into the scheme of things. The consensus was that examination of the place of an individual within the institution and the setting of personal goals was a function of the annual meeting between the individual Faculty members and the Dean, a meeting which occurs as one prepares for salary, promotion and tenure decisions. These examples from participants emphasize the distinction made.

> Ethel: Their own personal development? Well, that is really done by the Dean working with them on their annual evaluation and career plans. Like every year there's an annual evaluation done according to criteria that are set forth very explicitly. They submit a written evaluation and supporting documentation. . . . If they are going to be considered for promotion. . . . In this system, the Dean reviews them first and makes a decision and then the committee review the Dean's decision and decide if they agree or not. . . . The Dean has at least one annual meeting with each Faculty member. And part of that includes their own career plans. 6/4/3

> Lesley: Help meeting your personal goals towards your research and teaching is something you do yearly with the Dean. . . . Do as part of annual report, used for salaries and promotion. 6/11/6

Though the self-study was not seen as a process which necessitated personal self-reflection by individuals within the Faculty, Zoe did indicate that, because of her newness in the Faculty, "I'm really trying to find out who I am and where I am in this organization" 7/22/3. She continued, "There's a difference between how I as a person function within the Faculty and how my research and teaching is going which I would see talking with the

Dean about. . . . Not only am I evaluating Faculty, I'm trying to see where I sit in it. I'm also evaluating what nursing is for me" 7/22/4, 9.

For Frances, who was also relatively new in the Faculty but because of her position felt she held a broader perspective, some amount of individual self-evaluation was warranted but not evidenced during the process.

> I don't know how individuals will see this. In some ways I didn't get the feeling that people saw it as self-study. . . . I don't know how many other Faculty have looked at it in a very personal sense. They may eventually. I didn't get that impression from anybody I'd talked to so far. They may not have mentioned it. But I think that is an important part of it. And I suppose when the Faculty go to see the Dean with annual reports, it will come then. Because they know that the prior Dean, and I don't think it will be any different, has helped them quite a bit with setting priorities for themselves. 8/12(2)/19

With a clear indication of the self in this self-study experience being the Faculty as a whole, it then becomes necessary to consider how "Faculty" is defined. Interestingly enough, the process was limited to the participation of full-time Faculty members and students. At the time the self-study was conducted, the staff comprised 56 full-time and 24 part-time Faculty. The decision had been taken not to include the part-time staff. It was noted that though many part-time staff change over the years, a few people have worked for several years. In considering the non-involvement of part-time Faculty, Frances explained that

> there will be some who would have been here over the years, a few people who have worked for several years part time. But, on the whole, they change quite dramatically from year to year and I think that's the reason why it was decided that they wouldn't be included. First of all, it would be quite expensive. It would almost double the number we would have. Because I know we got up to almost 80 or 90 people with all our part time people. Secondly, I think there can be a different set of problems for part-time people and I'm not saying those problems shouldn't be addressed. But my experience would suggest that sometimes the problems of part-time people have to do with being part time. And that if you allow them to influence the process it would muddy the waters. That is the problems they see wouldn't be problems if they were full time. When you have, I think we have close to 50 people that had the choice of coming, a few didn't come, because I think we have at least 10 full-time sessionals. Some of them aren't even sessionals. They work 12 months but they're not on tenure track because they're Baccalaureate prepared but I know that the part time would have some interesting things to say but

> as I say I think some of their problems strictly relate to being part time and wouldn't change because they're part time. 8/12(2)/5, 6

There is little doubt that such a significant number of part-time Faculty in this unit would help to cast the character of the organization.

The definition of self as the unit as well as the system used for personal self-study within the Faculty influenced the conduct of the self-study particularly since the latter system was not integrated into the self-study process. The scope of engagement did not accommodate the opportunity to narrow the gap between unit and personal goals. This definition of self laid the groundwork for an objective analysis of elements of the unit, an analysis which did not readily facilitate some the concerns and interests of some members of the unit. The impact of this conceptualization of self-study becomes evident as the process, the experiences of the process and other factors which influenced the process or were elements of self not addressed directly during the self-study are described.

Audiences of the Self-Study. With the purpose of the self-study being defined differently by participants and the process being seen as an evaluation of the Faculty, the notion of self-study for whom became an issue of concern. Among participants, the audience was identified as being both the Faculty and a group that was external to the Faculty. It was recognized by some that both the interests of the Faculty and those of the university as articulated by PACCR could be served by the self-study. However, not all participants felt that this possibility was fully explored.

Referring to the report, Ethel said, "It's more of an information piece internally" 6/4/6. She also noted that the report would be available to persons outside the unit, since "Part of the process is that the people from other parts of the university who are asked to serve on the committee for input into the review committee get a copy of the self-study before they go to those meetings" 6/4/5. In other words, there was an external audience.

Daisy too saw the process as being an internal one noting, "The process was very useful as an internal look at our Faculty and not because we had to prepare some report because there was some mandate saying we must. . . . I saw it as for Faculty" 6/10/3, 6. She also recognized the existence of an external audience saying, "I applaud PACCR because I think a university ought not to be exempt from this kind of evaluation. I think it is an important thing. And I think we have a responsibility to demonstrate to the public that, in fact, we are doing this kind of thing" 6/10/7.

Although the purpose was not clear to some participants at the beginning of the exercise, the potency of the self-study for promoting an understanding of the Faculty by members was acknowledged. Meryl noted that "it helped us to see what we need to do" 5/28/4. However, she said,

> I think we could have probably made better use of the PACCR review for our own internal purposes. I think we could have perhaps developed far more cohesiveness on Faculty through the process of self-study if we only could have spent a whole year doing that. In fact, we might have mapped that out. I mean we had plenty of lead time to know when this thing was gonna be happening. I think we took the more pragmatic approach. 6/25/5

She was cognizant of both the internal value of self-study and the existence of external audiences. Reflecting on the extent to which the report was prepared for the university administration, Meryl said,

> I would think not a great deal because they said as far as we're concerned, there's no formula. There're no specific instructions. Here are some examples of how other people have done it. You tell us what your strengths and weaknesses are. Because it's so open-ended, unstructured, I doubt very much if we designed it to, I mean without expectations of the people who're responsible for dealing with assessment, I think perhaps that allows you to do it your way. But there's no question that we know that this thing will be seen probably by General Faculties Council. So that we would have been guided in our decision about what goes into this thing by the possible target group that's going to read this document. There's no question about that. We know the kind of circulation it's going to get and that would have influenced the way we decided to put it together or the kinds of information that was going in there. 6/25/6

Zoe whose major involvement in the self-study occurred at the retreat thought that the self-study was undertaken for an external audience more than an internal one. She said,

"I felt that maybe because I wasn't that involved, that it wasn't done for us as a Faculty; it was done for a wider community; that any kind of self-awareness that came from the self-evaluation as a Faculty was incidental rather than planned" 7/22/5.

It is apparent that the self-study was viewed as having the potential of serving both an internal and an external audience. How this position on the audiences affected the self-study will become evident as the process used in carrying out the self-study, the product of the self-study and the experiences of participants as they engaged in self-study are discussed in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER 4

Describing the Self-Study Process and Product

A. Introduction

The university administration publicized the introduction of the program review process. PACCR made a slide presentation on the process to Faculties, entertaining discussion on the issues. It also periodically informed the university community of activities which were occurring or were pending through the university newsletter. This, it was envisaged, would create a climate of awareness and sensitivity as well as serve as a facilitator for the process within the university community.

PACCR consulted each unit to determine a schedule for implementation of the self-study phase of the program review process. In the case of the Faculty of Nursing, about two years elapsed between the enquiry from PACCR and formal initiation of the process.

This chapter is devoted to a description of the process and the product of the self-study as reported by members of the Faculty of Nursing and evidenced from available documents.

B. Initiating the Process in the Faculty of Nursing

The first task in the initiation of the program review process was setting dates for the commencement and completion of the self-study. As would be expected, this depended on the priority placed on the activity in relation to other commitments within the unit. In the case of the Faculty of Nursing, though the importance and inevitability of the process were recognized, a significant prior commitment helped to determine the time frame for commencement of the conduct of the self-study.

When PACCR approached the Faculty about commencing its program review process, the Faculty was planning to host an International Nursing Research Conference in May 1986. Since this was considered "a huge undertaking in terms of organization" and it was envisaged that some time would be needed to complete all activities related to the

conference once it had been staged, the Fall of 1986 was suggested as an appropriate time to begin the self-study.

It was initially intended that orientation of the Faculty of Nursing to the program review process would occur at the September 1986 Faculty meeting. Unfortunately, Dr W. E. Harris, Chairman of PACCR, was unable to attend that meeting. However, Faculty were notified of the proposal to have him attend the October 1986 Faculty of Nursing Council meeting as indicated in the Minutes of the September 8, 1986 Faculty meeting and the September 15, 1986 Executive Committee meeting. This meant that each Faculty member who had attended and/or read the minutes of those meetings would have been cognizant of the impending review.

Consequently, it was at the October 20, 1986 Faculty Council meeting that the first official step was taken to initiate the program review process in the Faculty of Nursing. As was the custom throughout the university, Dr Harris explained the program review process to the Faculty. As gleaned from the Minutes of that meeting, in explaining the process, "Dr. Harris suggested that a committee be appointed to ensure that the document is produced on time. He stressed that the report should be concise and at the same time complete" (see Appendix 2).

C. Getting the Show on the Road

PACCR tossed the ball into the court of the Faculty of Nursing, on the one hand, saying do it your way while, on the other, suggesting that "a small steering group [be] responsible for its [the report's] preparation" (PACCR, n.d., p. 2). The Faculty of Nursing decided to use an existing group to perform this function, the group being the Executive Committee which was an integral part of the organization's structure. At the November 3, 1986 Faculty meeting, "Dean MacPhail asked for suggestions for involving faculty in planning and the self-study, indicating that the Executive Committee will be looking at it. . . . [She] indicated that the Executive Committee will initiate a mechanism to

move forward on this matter." But what did this entail? What did this mean for the lives of Faculty members?

One committee member volunteered to develop a tentative outline and suggested approaches to prepare the self-study report. This proved a valuable starting point. Meryl noted that "I think it was one person came up with large sections of what we thought our report should look like and this was tied in with our programs. In many ways it followed the organization of the Faculty" 5/28/1. Ethel said, "The Executive Committee which is elected decided to address the question of how to organize the Faculty and what headings to use. And so within our committee we agreed upon some headings" 6/4/1. Daisy observed that

> first of all, the plan for the report came from the Executive. The Executive came up with an outline of what was to be included in the report which was reviewed by Faculty and input was given by Faculty to some extent on the outline. But the outline generally stemmed from the work of the Executive who said, "Here are what we see as sections that need to be done." 6/10/1

With this "straw man" (as Daisy and Theresa referred to the outline) in hand, the Executive Committee could then proceed to develop a fuller outline for the report and devise strategies for completing the task. The following categories for the "PACCR Report" were delineated.

1. The Study and Practice of Nursing
2. Organization of the Faculty of Nursing
3. Undergraduate Programs
4. The Graduate Program
5. Scholarly Activities and Faculty Research
6. Research Support and Development
7. Academic Relationships
8. Professional Relationships and Community Services

9. Resources

10. Current Concerns and Future Directions

Work groups were defined, leaders identified and in some instances, other members of work groups named. The general decision was, however, that others could be recruited to assist in task completion. Meryl, Ethel and Daisy noted,

> Meryl: We discussed how we would go about this as a Faculty. And we divided the task up into a number of categories and each member of the committee was responsible for a section of the review. And each member of the Executive could recruit other members of Faculty to form a small committee. 5/28/1
>
> Ethel: And we appointed members of the committee responsible for various parts of this and then they could involve other people to help them do it. But there was one person responsible. They decided themselves sometimes it was easier to do some of it themselves and get it going rather than try to get everybody involved in the writing. 6/4/1
>
> Daisy: Here's our assignment of who ought to do these sections. And for the most part people worked together in completing sections. It was too large of a task for anyone to be totally responsible for a section and so it involved a number of Faculty. 6/10/1

In the initial proposal, two co-leaders were identified for three of the work groups, while six had one leader named. The tenth category "Current Concerns and Future Directions" was intended to be a composite of submissions from each group as well as from the Executive Committee.

Among the guidelines given to work groups was the following. "Strengths should be emphasized, but weaknesses should also be included. Charts should be used where possible. Include historical perspective and progress to the current situation and then to what is desired or projected."

Recognizing the need to work towards completion of the draft self-study report, the deadlines set were the Executive Committee meeting of March 23 for drafts of each section and the Faculty Retreat scheduled for April for revisions.

Once the framework was constructed, group leaders identified and the deadlines set, the team was faced with the task of data collection, data analysis and report writing. Each work group proceeded differently depending on the focus of its assignment.

D. Bits and Pieces

With an outline prepared and responsibilities assigned, leaders had to decide on the strategy to use to compile the draft of their section. Because it was possible to co-opt other members of Faculty to assist in the data collection and reporting process, the possibility existed for more persons to be involved in this stage of the self-study. The decision to use a structure which was part of the organization's mode of operation and with which most, if not all, Faculty members were familiar, served as a natural extension of substantive duties. The nature of the task differed for committees based on factors such as availability of data, familiarity with data and interpretation of the task. The illustration of four committees serves to highlight the diversity of approach.

One committee of four comprised one member of the Executive Committee who served as chair, "two others from Garneau," one of whom was also a member of the Executive Committee with the other being very involved in international nursing and a fourth person whose area of responsibility was being covered in this section. That committee took the decision to request information from all Faculty members. Meryl described their approach.

> We asked all Faculty to give that section of their curriculum vitae which summarized what they had done [and was related to the section]. And not everybody responded to our memorandum that went out to them. . . . We called them up and talked to them sometimes if we needed clarification. Somebody we knew had done something rather interesting who had not given us their CV. Informal discussions. 5/28/3, 5

This attempt to involve all Faculty did not receive full support as some persons did not respond to the request to submit needed information but this did not deter members of this committee who had varied experiences within the Faculty.

For another committee, the first step was to go back to an existing committee and ask representatives from each year of the program to amass material pertinent to their work. Lesley indicated that the representatives "talked about the year, the core courses, the main purposes of the year, how students were evaluated" 6/11/2. Other course leaders were also asked to provide more information. In this way, a number of Faculty members working in this program were involved.

A third committee used a different approach. The members first relied on the statistics which were available within the Faculty and used information which was included in calendars. "The vast majority of the material that was put in PACCR certainly for [two] programs was material that we normally had," Daisy stated 8/11/1. Although the material was available, it meant going through the documents and extracting the data needed. Also, the committee had to gather additional data. According to Daisy,

> We did follow up on the graduates, what they had been doing. Again we had some of that because we had developed that . . . brochure. . . . So we did send out a survey once we started PACCR asking the Alumnae Association if they would please try to get hold of everybody and to let us know particularly what they were publishing. 8/11/1

Daisy had been involved in the preparation of two sections. In the case of the other committee on which she sat, the process was similar to that used by Meryl's group. She said,

> You had to go to Faculty and say please update your CV then give it to me. And you had to follow up and follow up and follow up with them. And then you had to go through their CV because there were so many things that we needed from their curriculum vitae. . . . And in some cases we knew that Faculty had done things that weren't on their CV, so we would go back to them and say, "Well, you don't have this on it and we know you did it." 6/10/1

It is evident that more than one committee approached Faculty members for similar information, not receiving the desired response from all. It is also obvious that familiarity with the work of others was instrumental in the solicitation and procurement of data, a fact which brings to fore one subjective element of the self-study process. The ability of the

self-study to tell the story of the unit was influenced in part by the foreknowledge of some of writers.

Information was sought from individual Faculty members with this strategy serving to involve a wider cross-section of the unit in the self-study. Data were also gathered from documents such as Faculty publications and records. In other cases, they had to be gathered afresh.

Once the material was amassed, the next step was organizing it into coherent sections. Meryl's team which used curriculum vitae as a data source approached their task thus: "The four of us divided it up, cut and pasted, and tried to do a content analysis" 5/28/3.

Actually, there was a chain of activities in the process of compiling sections of the draft report. The perspectives of Andrea who worked individually on a subsection, of Lesley who worked with others and of Frances who was a leader of a group illustrate stages in the process.

> Andrea: I wrote my section, submitted it to the person who was compiling [this] portion of the report. That person submitted that portion to the person who was compiling the whole report. 5/21(2)/1
>
> Lesley: With me, I was on Executive and responsible for x program and along with one other person. What I did was take it back to the x committee of which I'm Chair and say this is the input and all of you will get that material and bring it back in. We were free to some extent to get people to help us. Though there may have been one or two people from Executive who worked together to do the final put together. 6/26/7
>
> Frances: Everyone on my committee had a certain area that they or they and somebody else, sometimes people paired up, that they were asked to do. For example, one person did xxxx. She was someone who had been here when it historically started so she wrote up everything that she knew about the xxxx, how it evolved, the concerns about them, the positive and negative about xxxx and she was also a person who had xxxx. . . . So everybody had a parcel cut off that they did either as one or with other people. They didn't have all the information. They collected it either from committee members or from those who weren't committee members but knew the material. . . . Then we tried to put it all together. And [two of us] worked mostly on it together . . . after the original came in from people to put it into one somewhat coherent whole. 8/12(2)/6

Group leaders were reminded at the Executive Committee Meeting of March 9, 1987 that progress reports and not final reports were due on March 23 at the next Executive Committee meeting. By that date, five of the nine assigned sections were completed with three of the remaining being due four days later and the due date for the ninth being set for over five weeks later. Recognizing that the production of an entire document necessitated more than concatenation of the sections submitted, a committee of three was formed to compile the working draft report. Members of Executive Committee were then "free to review the reports and submit their suggestions" to that committee.

With a draft prepared, it was then time for seeking greater involvement of the wider Faculty. This was attempted through a two-day retreat which was held in April.

It is apparent that the preparation of the working draft report was one requiring collaboration. It is also apparent that the chain of activities involved in reaching this product opened the data to multiple interpretations at each subsequent link of the chain. The significance of this facet of the process will be discussed later.

E. The Retreat

There is little doubt that the co-ordination of the activities of a large number of persons is a task which can assume mammoth proportions. Much more so was the attempt to have as many persons as possible if not all Faculty members involved in the self-study of the unit. While it was considered inappropriate to attempt to involve all unit members in the writing of the self-study report, the retreat was organized as a means of promoting greater participation of the full-time Faculty in the production of the report. This strategy was seen as a viable solution, according to Ethel.

> We decided that we would have the whole Faculty work on it at the Faculty retreat. We have a two-day retreat every year. And this year we decided to focus on the PACCR review. And that was a very good way to involve everybody. Some had had some involvement but it was impossible to involve everybody in getting it done. 6/4/2

Occurring over a two-day period, the retreat brought together a large proportion of the full-time Faculty. It was intended that all full-time Faculty members would attend since it had been discussed at Faculty meetings and was considered a "command performance" (Lesley, 6/11/4). Meryl said, "I shouldn't think there was anybody on staff who wasn't aware that they were expected to be there" 6/25/2. However, not all Faculty attended for reasons which included other academic activities and difficulty in making adequate child care arrangements.

The draft report prepared by the Executive Committee was circulated to all full-time Faculty members prior to the retreat. This enabled Faculty members to read the document before the event and come prepared to discuss, not only the issues covered in the report, but also those of concern to them.

In order to encourage greater involvement, the organizers utilized a small group followed by a large group method for discussion of the report. Six work groups were formed, each being chaired by a member of the Executive Committee. In some groups, contributions were recorded on sheets of paper. All groups reported in plenary where the discussion was continued. Secretaries recorded the proceedings.

During the two-day period, Faculty examined the draft, questioning the content and structure. This gave some direction to the future countenance of the final self-study report.

As a result of the retreat, changes were made to the outline and content of some sections of the report. According to Lesley,

> Some sections are pulled out because there are things that weren't being said. . . . One of the things that we hadn't done, we'd thought it would fit under our programs as teaching, that's being lost. We have some excellent teachers in the Faculty. We pulled out a section called teaching, another called students, how they are evaluated, their input into university life and the Faculty's life on a local and national level. 6/11/1

In fact, two new sections were proposed, one related to teaching (teaching innovations and student advisement) and the other to students covering issues like recruitment, composition of the student body and committee participation.

F. After the Retreat: Towards the Self-Study Report

After the retreat, at the May 1 Executive Committee meeting, it was decided that revisions needed to be made to some sections and two sections would be added. The persons responsible for these activities were also identified. For persons not involved in the rewriting, there was some uncertainty about the state of the report after that meeting. As Meryl said, "Then nothing. We have heard nothing since. . . . What I suspect is that two or three people did a lot of work in pulling the final report together and we haven't heard anything" 6/25/3. In fact, the core group continued to work on the report trying to put together a document which presented, from their perspectives, a clear portrait of the Faculty. Frances gave an indication of what had been occurring.

> I sat with [two other persons] . . . and we tried to edit sections of it as a threesome. We met several evenings or afternoons going into the evenings to edit the total document, section by section. So I had something to do with that. Then [two of us] sat down a couple of afternoons and went over the x program. . . . So the two of us spent a couple of afternoons going through my total section. Then the [three of us] went through various parts of it together. . . . I have read it through at least twice and I have done editing of various sections although I parcelled out the x program. . . . I have had quite a few readers going through the total document or sections of it. . . . We've tried to get as many people, especially of those who have been around for quite a while, to go over and pick out discrepancies, pick out incorrect information, and to see if it makes sense. 8/12(2)/7

Without being involved in the process of refining the final report, many participants were unaware of the progress which had been made in completing the task or of the dimensions of that process itself.

G. The Self-Study Report

The self-study report represented the Faculty of Nursing's manner of telling its story. The primary evidence of the Faculty's efforts was a 69-page single-spaced

document. This document addressed the status and concerns of the Faculty under the following headings.

The General Introduction covered the history of nursing at the University of Alberta beginning in 1921 with courses in public health funded by the Canadian Red Cross Society. It traced stages in its development to establishment of a School of Nursing under the Faculty of Medicine in 1923, through achievement of autonomous status in 1966 to establishment of the Faculty of Nursing in 1976. It also contained a general description of the programs run independently and jointly with the Faculty of Medicine, the University of Alberta Hospitals and other health care institutions. In describing what has been achieved within the Faculty, the report read,

> Over the past twenty years the Directors and Deans of the Faculty of Nursing have provided visionary leadership which has helped to establish this Faculty as one of the leaders in the profession across Canada. Faculty members have supported this leadership through pursuit of advanced education, through seeking research grants, and through contributions to community and professional activities. The overall image of the Faculty of Nursing among Canadian faculties of nursing is of a sound academic unit providing strong leadership, particularly in the areas of research and graduate education. (Faculty of Nursing, 1987, p. 4)

Organization of the Faculty of Nursing addressed the organizational structure, administrator functions and communication network. It was noted that in addition to the Dean, Associate Deans, Directors and Co-ordinators, "selected, experienced faculty members are invited to be course leaders in relation to their clinical expertise, experience and leadership ability" (Faculty of Nursing, 1987, p. 5). This section also described the characteristics of the staff, the nature of graduate and undergraduate involvement in the unit and some of the concerns related to the current organization within the Faculty.

The Undergraduate Program as pertained from 1976 to 1987 was addressed in terms of its philosophy and desired outcomes. Program content and management were also described with strengths, concerns and future directions being delineated.

The Graduate Program was viewed historically. The individual programs and the proposed PhD program were described. Reference was made to the performance of current students and the achievement of graduates of the program. Conclusions and concerns were also delineated.

Research and Scholarly Activities and Funding. This section detailed the funded research activities of staff from 1976 to mid-1987, unfunded research activities from 1982 to 1986, summary of publications of staff and other research-related activities. The need for research space which could facilitate increased production among staff was noted. Looking to the future, it was stated that

> to continue to encourage and support research activities, additional strategies will be considered. One approach is the formation of collaborative groups of both experienced and inexperienced researchers with common research interests. Another is the expansion of the Research Facilitation Office to include greater methodological, statistical, and editorial services. (Faculty of Nursing, 1987, p. 49)

The functioning of the administrative units, the role of the course leaders, the strategies used in student advisement, intra- and extra- university relationships as well as joint appointments were addressed under Academic Relationships.

The Public and Professional Service of Members of the Faculty were described. Involvement in professional associations, consultancy activities at the local, national and international levels, the provision of continuing education and voluntary service characterized the efforts of members of the unit.

The state of and need for Resources were the focuses of this section of the report. The resources addressed were staffing, space, equipment, finances, library and related learning materials and clinical laboratory facilities.

Future Directions for the Faculty of Nursing, the final section of the report, detailed short term and long term goals of the Faculty.

The outline differed from the straw man in subtle ways. "The Study and Practice of Nursing" gave way to a "General Introduction" which documented the history of nursing at the University of Alberta. Two proposed sections were combined into "Research and Scholarly Activities and Funding" with funding being given more heightened attention than previously. The section envisioned as "Current Concerns and Future Directions" yielded to "Future Directions for the Faculty of Nursing" with concerns being addressed within the body of the report. Future directions were also delineated for the undergraduate program.

The report was supplemented by appendices which included curriculum vitae of academic staff and course outlines.

H. Review of the Process and Product of Self-Study

The model of program review used by the University of Alberta was open-ended with regard to the conduct of unit self-study. Included in the guidelines given by PACCR were the suggestions that the self-study address issues such as history, current status, pending changes, future prospects, strengths and limitations. In addition, it was suggested that a small committee be charged with ensuring that the self-study be completed on time. The Faculty of Nursing did address the suggested issues and did utilize an existing committee to be responsible for compiling the draft report.

PACCR also noted that "the most successful studies are those that involve a majority of members of a department" (PACCR, n.d., p. 1). There were various levels of involvement possible in the self-study conducted by the Faculty of Nursing. First, at the level of organization, though the Dean invited suggestions for involvement of Faculty in the self-study and in its planning, the initial outline was prepared by one person and refined within the Executive Committee. Second, the leaders of the work groups were members of the Executive Committee who could and did recruit assistance from within the Faculty. Third, an attempt was made to involve the majority of full-time Faculty at the retreat. Fourth, persons who were considered knowledgeable about the Faculty in terms of its

development and that of its programs were relied upon to provide needed information. One reality seems to be that the degree of involvement of a majority of Faculty members was limited. As Meryl remarked, "I'm not really sure if the process was experienced sufficiently by everybody. I rather suspect that it's only meaningful for a very few of us, except for the retreat" 6/25/5.

Members of the Faculty who were not directly involved in preparing sections of the initial draft report had an opportunity to make a contribution and to have their work included if only by submission of their curriculum vitae. Some chose not to respond to the request for submission of this document thus reducing the probability of achieving the PACCR objective of involving a large proportion of the unit in the process. This led to increased dependence on the knowledge of committee members of the work of some of the non-respondents to access data which they deemed pertinent.

Participation in the retreat was limited to full-time staff members. Therefore, the concerns of the 24 part-time staff were not directly addressed during the self-study. Their inclusion was considered but it was felt that the self-study would be significantly coloured if their inputs were included.

Not every full-time Faculty member attended the retreat. For some persons, therefore, there was no direct input into the self-study report nor participation in the self-study process as a whole.

CHAPTER 5

Experiencing the Self-Study: What Did it Mean?

A. Introduction

It is evident that the self-study process was experienced differently by members of the Faculty of Nursing. This is not surprising since the approach used and the nature of the activities ensured that there were different levels of involvement of Faculty members. The level of involvement was influenced by an individual's proximity to the Faculty's Executive Committee, length of association with the unit and knowledge of the Faculty as perceived by key actors in the process. This section focuses on the experience of the stages of the self-study for participants in the research.

B. Views of the Process of Initiation

Faculty were all aware that their unit would be involved in the university's program review process. At the September 8, 1986 Faculty Meeting, the Dean notified the staff that Dr Harris, Chairman of PACCR would be present at the October Faculty of Nursing Council meeting to introduce them to the review process.

Members of the unit had all been engaged in some form of evaluation during their academic lives yet not all had had experience with institutional self-evaluation. Some members of the Faculty had had experience with the PACCR process as students in departments which had completed reviews, as external reviewers for other units or had worked in institutions which had participated in accreditation exercises or had undergone curriculum review. What was different in this case, however, was that the PACCR process had been specially designed for this institution and those who had had experience in other contexts would find subtle differences in their role. Here, they comprised part of the object of the evaluation.

The initiation meeting was an opportunity to introduce members of the Faculty to the program review process at the institution, to clarify questions related to the self-study

process itself, to articulate the role of the Faculty and its members in the process and give a sense of purpose for the exercise. The interviews revealed that these possible outcomes were not realized by all Faculty members. One assumption within the Executive Committee seemed to be that past experience with related processes had much currency in giving direction to the exercise.

Reflecting on the manner in which they had been introduced to the process in their Faculty, participants' reactions covered a range from Theresa's cursory "He just explained the process which I already understood" 5/21(1)/1 through Nancy's more distracted

> The first day when he came to the Faculty, my sense of the Faculty in that meeting was, that it was not resistance but not keen to know why they're in this kind of a ho-hum. He presented the idea and there was a woman there. I don't know what her role was. . . . There was somebody else there. I don't even know and I wondered why the whole troupe of them had to come if there wasn't going to be a little more presence from each one in the group. I wondered about his role as a retired person, how he got into that job and what his own training in evaluation was or if it was a functionary position. And I wondered a bit particularly about that woman, if she was token or if she was integral to the process of the Committee. . . . I found her adjunct, not integral. [That initial meeting] was very flat. . . . Certainly didn't inspire me. . . . This was very perfunctory. 5/29/2

to Lesley's response which reflected uncertainty at the end of the meeting.

> Don't think I really understood. I didn't really get a sense of what we were to do in the self-study. Only going through the process that I got a better idea. It was more of an informational session. It was a first time event for me. I didn't get a clear idea of the purpose. I would have had a better idea if I'd had some materials to read beforehand, like why the PACCR review was started, its purpose and what we hoped to achieve by the process. That would have given a better sense to be more attentive to what they were attempting. 6/11/4

Although Meryl was absent from the meeting at which the process was explained, she talked about her understanding of it as gleaned from the minutes.

> I missed that [initiation] session which was unfortunate. So I only got whatever was in the minutes of the meeting. I think there would have been a fair amount of interest because we are caught up as nurses in quality assurance these days and I would think that for that reason people would at least understand the reason if not like the fact that it's happening to us right now. It was extremely unstructured. The concept was interpreted but thereafter, you do it your own way. That came through very loud and clear.

> There's no recipe for the thing. You tell us what you want to tell us and do it how you wish to, as you think is best. There are a few who can't cope with that kind of ambiguity. 5/28/6

For Zoe who had herself been a student in a department which had completed its review and had had student involvement, though she recognized that the program review process had various parts, she was unsure of the nature of the Faculty's responsibility and the manner of her involvement 7/22/1.

These are certainly varied views of that meeting, a key event at which the interpretation and expectations of the process could have been made clear from an institutional standpoint. Is it possible that being uninformed of the purpose of the review exercise and the role of the participants in the process could have influenced the action of Faculty members? This would seem to be the case since the interpretation of the purpose and the role of participants was then likely to be determined by persons whose concept of self-study was informed by past experience outside of the unit.

Is it appropriate to assume that because, as Meryl said, "We are caught up as nurses in quality assurance" 5/28/6 that nursing Faculty would understand and maybe even be expected to accept the task of self-study and be able to produce the requisite document "on time"? It would seem not since the requirements of self-study and quality assurance are different with one being a one-shot activity and the other an integral part of the unit's business.

The initiation meeting did not serve as a point of clarification of issues for some participants and likely for other members of the wider Faculty. The direction of the self-study was largely determined later within the Executive Committee with the wider Faculty being brought in at the retreat.

C. Experiences of the Retreat

The retreat was intended by the Executive Committee to serve as an opportunity for greater involvement of the full-time Faculty members in the self-study. By and large, the

nature of this involvement was envisaged to be directed by the report rather than the broader possibility of discussion of issues seen pertinent to the Faculty's functioning and therefore germane during the process of self-reflection. While the interaction and outcomes of the retreat were generally seen as positive by those who were more involved, Nancy and Zoe were not as enthusiastic. Their expectations of exploration of possibilities were unrealized. What is evident is that different levels of involvement resulted in different expectations and degrees of satisfaction.

The two-day event, considered a command performance, necessitated that staff assemble the night prior to the official commencement of the discussions. Nancy was concerned about this requirement.

> I made sure I was out there the evening before as was requested and while I would rather have slept in my own bed the night before, I saw no reason to go out the night before, and while I thought that had I been in another Faculty, probably they would have allowed me to be grown up enough that they wouldn't have requested and instructed that we should come out the night before but let us make sure we got there for 9 o'clock when it started. 5/29/2, 3

However, for others such as Daisy and Lesley, the opportunity this provided to socialize with people with whom time did not usually allow much interaction was rather appreciated. As a matter of fact, the retreat enabled some Faculty to meet others whom they had not met previously, in particular bringing together persons whose offices were in the Clinical Sciences Building with those whose offices were in Garneau.

The Executive Committee had agreed that the retreat would be an excellent mechanism for involving everyone in the preparation of the self-study report. It is therefore understandable that members of the Executive went to the retreat expecting to discuss the report over the two-day period. Zoe and Nancy who were not involved in writing the report and who were attending a retreat for the first time had different expectations. Zoe said,

> I had a sense that we'd as a group talk about some of the things that were happening in the Faculty, that we'd work through some of those things. I guess I

> had my own questions about some things and I wanted them discussed. . . . I went to the retreat with quite a bit of enthusiasm to talk but over the two days I became less and less involved. . . . I think I had envisioned from the beginning that the retreat was a time for me to get to know other Faculty, to really get into issues, have time to talk and do it in a place that was free of distractions. That we would be able to work together, to discuss. I didn't feel that happened. I felt it was very controlled because we had this fixed agenda, that we had to go through this material, make sure we had the spelling right. It felt almost like that to me. That's being unfair because it was much broader than that. But the feeling was that we had to make sure that it was done right. 7/22/1, 10

For Zoe, the retreat as an integral part of the self-study process could have been an opportunity to examine and possibly resolve issues which were of concern to her and which she considered having implications for the wider Faculty. Yet this did not happen. The agenda set for the retreat within the Executive Committee was not perceived to accommodate this kind of analysis. In other words, the degree of involvement in the self-study available to Faculty was, by and large, defined by those issues addressed in the self-study report.

Based on her experience within the Faculty, Nancy had expected the dynamics of interaction to yield friction at the retreat. This she did not find. She noted,

> Maybe I expected there would be a bit more controversy or expected I would feel a little more tension but I didn't find it tense. Something had triggered me to expect a certain amount of tension and I didn't really find that. I didn't find it uncomfortable. Maybe it wasn't the format to express radical views. 5/29/3

Participants who were actively involved in preparing the report were generally pleased with the process and immediate outcomes of the retreat. Daisy, Lesley and Frances respectively expressed their satisfaction with the immediate results.

> Daisy: There was very good discussion at the retreat and Faculty were very helpful, making contributions too. "We don't like the way this is stated." "We think you've missed something here." "We think it should give this message not that message." And all of those suggestions were taken under advisement. And I imagine the majority were acted upon. 6/10/2, 3

> Lesley: People left with a more extensive cohesiveness than we've had for a while. 6/11/3

> Frances: My sense was that there was a fair amount of participation. The groups certainly came back with a tremendous amount of feedback, some of it contradictory. One group would want this and another group would want the opposite. I think for the most part Faculty had a fair amount to say and a great deal of it was incredibly relevant. 8/12(2)/3

While Frances heard some contradiction, not all participants found that conflicting messages were being sent. In fact, Lesley and Meryl noted that what they heard was rather congruent. Lesley said, "I saw Faculty talking about strengths of the Faculty. They were realistic about the concerns. I heard us saying similar things across programs and across people" 6/11/3. What is important, however, is that Frances who was one of the persons involved in the finalization of the report had heard contradictions. It is possible that her perception of contradiction created a situation in which new interpretations were introduced as an attempt was made to represent the position of the Faculty.

As noted above, there was much satisfaction among participants who were involved in the writing of the report with the process and outcomes of the retreat. They felt that many people made valuable contributions to the discussion and facilitated achievement of the objective of examining the report from many perspectives. But this was not the objective of the retreat for the entire Faculty. Without close proximity to the arena of creation of the report and the contingent processes, Faculty ran the risk of not fully grasping what was intended.

Nancy said, "I would have liked to have seen more visions. Dream dreams. . . ." 5/29/3. For her, then, the self-study process was an opportunity to explore possibilities within the Faculty. For as she noted, evaluation is about opening up rather than closure which seemed to be the orientation taken within the Faculty. Zoe summed up the retreat as an activity where

> a lot of the time in the workshop was spent with how do we prepare this document to be viewed in the best light by everyone so that we were really thinking about not self-study but who we were presenting it for so that any kind of criticism or any questions that there might be criticism was not really dealt with because that wasn't how we wanted to be seen, in conflict or not even in conflict but working towards

> developing something. We wanted to be seen as already arrived in some way. 7/22/2, 3

Andrea who had not attended the retreat but had contributed to the draft stated that "the purpose of the retreat was to recreate" 5/21(2)/1. The focus of the retreat on the self-study report emphasized the need of the unit to tell its story to PACCR and the other publics.

By the time the retreat occurred, much of the work on the self-study report had already been done. This meant that the opportunity for unit self-study as self-reflection on processes and functions within the unit was delimited to issues which could be reported upon. The possibility of self-study as a process for discussion of issues and concerns which could be immediately resolved or for which strategies for resolution could be planned was not readily facilitated. This implies that the design of self-study needs to cater for inputs from constituents prior to the commitment of the results of self-study to paper. This would enhance the identification of unit members with the process and the product, reduce the amount of disenchantment with the outcomes of the process, increase the possibility of ownership being assumed by unit members and the likelihood of utilization of the results of the self-study.

D. View of the Self-Study Report

The report was the most visible outcome of the effort which members of the Faculty expended over a 9-month period. It was what PACCR saw as embodying the way in which the Faculty envisioned itself in the past, the present and in the future. Putting it together took a lot of co-ordination, co-operation and effort and resulted in a document which, in the end, was considered suitable by some Faculty members for the purpose of telling the story of the Faculty of Nursing.

However, the report was, as with so many aspects of the self-study, viewed from different perspectives. This is understandable since participants in the study, apart from having different life experiences, values and interests generally experienced different levels

of involvement in the process. Additionally, as was seen in chapter 3, there was no consensus on the purpose of the self-study which resulted in diverse expectations of the outcomes. This has led to disagreement regarding which version of the Faculty's story should be told in the report.

There was some concurrence that the Dean had a major impact on the report. However, the reasons for this varied. Andrea felt that "the Dean is retiring and she wants it as a record of her tenure" 5/21(2)/2. Lesley said, "The report certainly will reflect [the Dean] because, for me, she's done so much work on the report" 8/12(1)/2. Meryl noted, "She's probably written close to 30% of it. It may well be that she has the overview" 5/28/4. She later commented,

> I rather suspect that what's in the document has much more to do with the achievements of the current Dean and her particular goals for the Faculty than what might lie ahead for the new Dean. For example, the emphasis on research and off campus collaboration between university and agencies. These were really things which were very dear to her heart. 6/25/5

It is identifiable that the report was considered to have been significantly influenced by the Dean's emphases and input. As indicated on the guidelines for the report, the Dean herself was responsible for three sections of the report. While Dressel (1976) said that "a good report is not written by a committee but by one or more individuals who were sensitive to the feelings and insights of the individuals who make up the total committee and to the rationale and the data supporting the recommendations" (p. 286), this can create a problem of ownership. Additionally, this strategy could contribute to increased filtering of information provided by others. Conrad and Wilson (1985) also advanced that the conduct of self-study at the end of the tenure of one Dean or Department Head is a valuable means of initiating the incoming leader. I question the suitability of such timing since such a self-study could be interpreted as a summation of the contributions of the outgoing leader rather than a reflection of the state of affairs within the unit as perceived by staff who would be expected to work with the incoming Dean. The issue of timing is indeed problematic.

Despite the fact that the Dean was seen as having a major influence on the report, there is no doubt that others worked on the document using an outline agreed upon by the Executive Committee and examined and commented on by a cross-section of the full-time Faculty at the retreat. As Meryl said, "Many people had an opportunity to contribute to the report. Whether they all did is another matter" 5/28/5. The non-response of some members of staff may be a reflection of the lack of appreciation of the potential significance of the self-study for the Faculty.

In constructing the report, although a number of persons were involved in writing sections of the report, there was a concern about what was appropriate for inclusion. It was felt that some issues were internal ones which need not be disclosed to a wider audience. There was also a concern that the report should not be too long. In referring to the final report, Lesley and Meryl both of whom had made major contributions stated,

> Lesley: I'm not sure we put everything in there. I didn't have much to do with it. But I don't think a lot of the stuff that PACCR really thought we should tell the world about actually went in there. I think that was again the small core group of senior Faculty that did the final editing and work that made the decision that this is good information and yes, it's important but it's really not relevant to the process. . . . People said PACCR didn't want to read six million pages. 8/12(1)/3

> Meryl: I'm sure there's a discrepancy between some of the more senior people on Faculty about what needs to be there and doesn't. Sure each individual member has some ideas about what ought to be there or doesn't need to be there. I'm sure each individual Faculty member has some ideas about what ought to be there and what isn't. It is not really a document for airing those grievances that can be settled internally. It's just not that kind of document. 6/25/6

According to Daisy, "When it came to the conclusions and the concerns, that was probably the hardest part of all of the report because not wanting to make PACCR just a dumping spot for every problem everybody has, we did have to think about what were our major problems" 8/11/1.

Zoe expressed her view this way. "CV is part of the report. Don't put in CV our struggles. . . . In a way the self-study report was like that. These are the things we've accomplished. These are the things we've got in place. These are the number of PhDs we have . . . to show how impressive we are" 7/22/11.

Bearing in mind that the self-study report should not and could not be the forum for addressing certain issues, the question arises of whether those issues which were considered as internal ones were examined during the self-study process or whether they were likely to be at a later date. In other words, did the self-study function as an opportunity for Faculty to engage in self-reflection on an individual or collective basis and to take steps towards resolving the existing "grievances" which, it was felt, could be resolved internally? Were strategies mapped out to enable these issues to be addressed if not resolved at a later date? Frances opined,

> I think I can see issues that we have to try to come to grips with within the Faculty that will never be resolved and everybody will be happy with the resolution. But I think that there are other things that when you are presenting yourself externally that definitely are not appropriate. They have to be dealt with some time and I don't think they'll be forgotten issues at least from my point of view they won't be when they have to do with my area. And I don't think they will be necessarily to do with all the rest of the administrators but I think some Faculty have problems distinguishing between their kind of individual concerns which need to be resolved internally versus an overall look at Faculty. So I think there are some things that Faculty will be a little disappointed that they don't get mentioned in the actual written report. 8/12(2)/4

Frances' position suggests that the self-study placed much emphasis on "presenting yourself externally" a point which Zoe raised as she reflected upon the retreat. That is, that the focus of self-study was the preparation of the self-study report for an external audience. Indeed, PACCR (n.d.) stated that the report "should not reflect a total preoccupation with its preparation but it should arise out of a serious, mature self-examination" (p. 2). It is possible that this unit underutilized this opportunity to engage in the type of self-examination afforded by an internal exercise.

It seems that much attention was paid to providing the appropriate information in the report, information appropriate for presentation to PACCR. This provoked a certain amount of frustration and concern both from the standpoint of creation and recreation of the report. Andrea said,

> I wrote my section, submitted it to the person who was compiling [this] portion of the report. That person submitted that portion to the person who was compiling the whole report. It was edited again and the draft was discussed at the retreat. One section was totally omitted. One section was written so that it was totally incorrect and that section was edited down to two sentences. Whoever edited that whole report wanted to recreate it as a whole paragraph and didn't have the information. Several areas that should have been addressed were not there either. 5/21(2)/1

Frances remarked, "I had to constantly go back because in rewording, I wasn't sure what the first part meant so, in order to edit, I had to know exactly what they meant. I found that a bit frustrating I would have to say" 8/12(2)/2.

Both Andrea and Frances illustrated that the attempt to present information gleaned from persons with different perspectives, different interests and different understandings can pose problems in the final analysis. To what extent were these problems exacerbated by the design of the self-study? To what extent did the division of "tasks" lead to a development of ownership by individuals of the information which they provided?

The design of and the approach to the self-study helped to make the accommodation of the multiple realities within the unit problematic. The report was seen as a reflection of the interests of the Dean and as a document in which information which was considered appropriate for the audiences defined as PACCR and its constituents by key persons was reported. We must bear in mind that, as Becker (cited in Adelman & Alexander, 1981) pointed out, because of the plurality in organizations, no report is likely to please everybody. Members of the Faculty and the Faculty itself were not emphasized as being primary among the audiences, a fact which is addressed below.

E. Outstanding Issues

The self-study seems to have been greatly influenced by the fact that the report was seen as being prepared for distribution to an audience wider than the unit itself. During the process, issues raised in written submissions by individuals were not included in the final document (for example, Andrea's contribution), others raised in discussion at the retreat did not fit on the agenda (for example, Zoe's concerns), yet others were not addressed at all according to Meryl. These issues, considered internal issues, were of interest to the persons who raised them or mentioned them during the interviews and therefore held some measure of validity for them. That the primary decision makers in the process considered them inappropriate for inclusion in the report or that they were not voiced though considered potent issues seems to have rendered the self-study less incisive than possible. It also calls into question whether these issues would be addressed at a subsequent time, particularly with a new Dean due to take office.

The self-study, conducted over a 9-month period, basically addressed the topics identified by PACCR. However, Lesley opined that she did not feel that what PACCR wanted was included. In other words, though the non-prescriptive guidelines were followed, they allowed enough flexibility for the framers of the report to include what they considered appropriate for an external audience. In fact Frances, one of the persons responsible for the final version of the report, said, "I think there probably are some internal issues that aren't likely to appear in the report. Now I'm not saying they won't be worked on but they don't seem to be exactly appropriate for an external review committee" 8/12(2)/3.

Indeed, certain issues were raised and/or considered by individuals during the process but were not included in the report. According to Lesley, "There are things some Faculty felt should be put in and the people doing the final write up they think maybe it's

important for the Faculty but not necessarily important for the PACCR review, so it's deleted" 6/26/7.

The nature of the issues not addressed in the report and which were or were not raised during the process are of interest. For, they too, help to tell the story of the unit. Commenting on some of these issues, Meryl said, "Leadership style, for example. How do you capture that on paper in this kind of a review? And some of the interpersonal dynamics and so on that go on in the Faculty. You never get a feel for that" 5/28/2. Asked whether these had been addressed, she replied, "Not really, not seriously. I know we're small compared to other Faculties but it's very hard to get people altogether to talk about those sorts of things and even if you did, it would be rather unwieldy" 5/28/2. But what better time than during a self-study?

Zoe had hoped issues would be addressed which were germane to the field of nursing. The retreat, the point at which she had most involvement, did not allow for such exploration.

> I guess the things I wanted to deal with were curriculum issues, the approaches and philosophy, how we want to develop our program so there's some integration that goes through our program and I really wanted to do that. . . . Even at some point to look at a definition of health. Even to have discussions which may not lead to practical ends but really to start us thinking as a group of how we see the growth of the Faculty. 7/22/4

Asked whether she felt that her concerns would be addressed at another point in time, Zoe replied, "Within the Faculty? I keep thinking that we should be able to and maybe I'm naive, maybe I'm idealistic. Because for me there's a sense of conflict between what I'd like to see happen and what does happen" 7/22/2.

Other issues which were considered internal issues related to entry to practice and clinical placements, two issues peculiar to the field of nursing. These two issues were addressed in the report as real concerns for the Faculty even though it was expected that PACCR could not resolve them.

There were differences in perspective regarding what was appropriate for inclusion in a report which would be made available to an external audience. The decision on what issues should be included was seen to rest with the "senior people" (Lesley, 8/12(1)/3). The process of selection of issues for inclusion resulted in some issues not being raised, discussed nor included in the report or being misrepresented in the view of participants. There seemed not to be a mechanism devised during the process of self-study for redressing these issues. One way of focusing attention on some of these concerns was by raising them with the Unit Review Committee.

F. Role of the Unit Review Committee

The Faculty of Nursing spent 9 months engaged in the self-study process and producing a report. Different actors were involved at different points and with different levels of intensity. What resulted at the end of that period, the self-study report, was expected by PACCR to be the Faculty's version of its story. In other words, the report was intended to represent the Faculty's own assessment of itself and the picture it wanted to p.esent to the "public" whose interest it served.

But did the self-study allow all unit members to tell their story? Was it possible that because of the plurality existing in the unit many versions of the story could not be accommodated within the self-study report? If so, what did this mean for the relationship which the Faculty would have with the Unit Review Committee?

The retreat was designed to enable greater involvement of unit members in the self-study when the public identity of the Faculty was being addressed. Yet, for some participants, the Unit Review Committee was "one of the most important parts of the whole process. . . . That's when we have a chance to meet with the committee and to stress these things," Andrea said 5/21(2)/1,2. Meryl stated, "I'd suspect that we'll all of us be far more involved at that point than we have been up to now" 5/28/5.

The PACCR process was not seen as a dumping ground for grievances and matters which were considered to be internal issues. The self-study report was prepared to present a certain image of the Faculty, one which was considered appropriate for an external audience. Yet, there is resonance in the view that the visit of the Unit Review Committee would enable persons who did not agree with what was said in the report or had not raised issues during the self-study to voice those views. Meryl, Frances and Lesley provided examples of this position.

> Meryl: I imagine they will review all of the material we've put together and then they will interview some of us. I hope we'll all get a chance to read the report and those who do not agree with what is being said will make sure that the external committee hears about it. 6/25/3

> Frances: After the review committee comes in, I assume we'll find out even more things because there are a lot of sessions where Faculty can go. They can go separately in confidence and talk to any of the reviewers. So I assume we'll find out maybe even some things that didn't come up at the retreat, I don't know or maybe they'll be just repetitions. 8/12(2)/8

> Lesley: I think they have an opportunity to meet with us on an individual basis if they so wish but also to question, to bring out and to clarify points in the review. And to, maybe, if they read through the lines, to be able to clarify some of those types of points. I see them as playing that extra observational role. Things that you can't put in writing necessarily . . . or you don't want to. I'm sure that some Faculty will be extremely frank and open and others won't. And others will be open but maybe not quite as frank. 8/12(1)/9

Despite the fact that the Faculty had addressed concerns and future directions during their deliberations, there was the expectation that the Unit Review Committee would give directions to the Faculty in its development. These were Daisy's and Frances' perspectives.

> Daisy: I would see them as having an opportunity to read this [report] and say, "Gee, I think you're really strong here, you're weak there," as an outsider, as someone who is not intimately involved and perhaps is also knowledgeable about other Faculties. I guess I wonder about the objectivity of it because I think that one can make their self-study report direct in a lot of places. I mean it would perhaps be hard to cover up certain things. 8/11/3, 4

> Frances: I assume they'll come up with some very positive recommendations and some suggestions for change, and I think even having someone from the outside come in, you know, a leader or leaders in nursing as they will be and then external

> people that are not nurses, that they'll say well these people think we're doing quite well and that we've done many things that are great accomplishments and that our long term plans are great or whatever. But I think that that will be extremely positive and then again even being able to express their positive and negative feelings about what's going on here will be a good thing again. 8/12(2)/15

There seemed to be a contradiction between the desire to represent the Faculty to an external audience in an appropriate manner via the self-study report and the consideration of the appropriateness of expressing alternative views to the Unit Review Committee. This view of the role of the Unit Review Committee suggests that the Committee was seen as mediator.

G. Impact of Self-study on the Lives of Primary Participants

The Faculty of Nursing decided to initiate the program review process in the Fall of 1986 having completed the activities related to the hosting of the International Nursing Research Conference. One book had been closed while another was to be opened. The program review had to be completed since the university had instituted it for all academic and service units on campus. Therefore, the Faculty had to undertake another set of activities which were unrelated to their regular programs in the new academic year.

The self-study proved to be a costly experience for the primary participants. It required assumption of new tasks which had to be accommodated in their lives. This meant reordering their lives to be able to complete the assignments without a clear indication of what the benefits of the experience would be.

Theresa said, "Everyone did it as an add on, including the Dean" 7/29/5. The time had to be found to accommodate the exercise. For, as Daisy noted,

> I don't know that there is ever a time when the timing would have been right. We had advanced notice. . . . Certainly we knew that PACCR was coming. It wasn't a good time but . . . I can't tell you of a time that would have been good. . . . Other things that we might have done during that time period were surely put aside and were not done. It is an add on. The work load is so heavy that anything is an add on. I mean even our research and administration are add ons. 6/10/4

Giving priority to the self-study meant that the principal actors in the writing process had to make adjustments in their lives in order to accomplish the tasks undertaken. For Theresa who had contributed before the retreat but not after, it meant that she was able to get back to working on a project which she had set aside 7/29/4. Like her, others had to shelve their own research and, in some cases, other personal activities. Daisy's experience was "all I know, it was encumbersome and the reason I am not on vacation is because of the time I spent on PACCR and didn't spend on other things that I need to do" 8/11/12. Lesley said,

> This is something that is part of this university system and this is a commitment that we make. Obviously, it's our time for review and so you have to do it. So let's just get on and do it. Reorder your priorities or you cut out going to movies or taking some time off to just read. It's that type of stuff you give up, usually from your personal life. 8/12(1)/5

The Dean had indicated from the inception that the process would be a lengthy one. What participants found was that not only was it spread over a long period of time but it also was one which consumed much time of individuals, time which had to be diverted from other activities which form part of the normal activities of the Faculty. These activities were undertaken without any clear indication of what benefits could accrue to them. For example, Frances did query whether her contribution to the self-study process would be taken into account during the process of staff assessment.

H. Perceived Benefits of the Experience

Entering the world of "story telling" without a unified purpose, participants were unsure what the outcomes would be. Participants who were not involved in the final preparation of the report were also unsure of what the final version would look like. Yet, some benefits were seen to have been derived from the experience. Meryl noted,

> It was a very significant exercise for me because it meant that I was going to have a complete look at everything that we do in the Faculty. And frankly that was the first time. . . . It seemed to me like a marvellous opportunity to take a look at what we do and the directions we want to go. . . . I think most of us on Executive, and we're all extremely busy people, we felt it

> was a good opportunity to get it all down on paper and be able to see the whole thing. 5/28/2

This reaction to the self-study was indicative of one of the positive spin-offs of the experience. Despite the time devoted to the self-study and the consequent diversion of efforts from personal pursuits, the opportunity to become more familiar with the institution was welcomed. What also became more evident was the need to orient staff to the unit, a fact that had been recognized before but which had not been concretized by action. Nancy benefited in this manner.

> I found this more as an orientation to the people with whom I was working and an orientation to the goals and ideals of this Faculty, although I had read what I could about it. . . . For me, it's a way of motivating a group. I'm terribly influenced in my thinking about planning [by vast experience] . . . in this Faculty, getting to know my Faculty members, getting to hear how they thought on a whole variety of structured issues that might take years to ever find out what people think on this subject or to talk about those subjects with Faculty members in such a rich way, I felt, in our group. 5/29/1, 2

Daisy had this to say.

> A number of Faculty, particularly new Faculty, expressed how wonderful the experience was because they learnt all sorts of things about the programs that they didn't know anything about. They learnt the history of how curriculum came about and how it got changed and modified. So it was a tremendously important orientation session for new Faculty and for older Faculty. I thought it was a very informative, interesting process. It made us look at ourselves and say what are our good points and what are our bad points. We had trouble formulating those because you had to think in the long range about where we should go in the future and it's always difficult to think of that in the midst of the crunch when you're dealing with all sorts of problems every day and you're behind schedule to have to think about what it's going to be like five years from now. But I think the process was very informative for Faculty. . . . I heard many people comment and certainly I did feel that the process was very useful as an internal look at our Faculty and not because we had to prepare some report because there was some mandate saying that we must and that was a useless activity on our part. . . . Many of us felt it was a useful process. . . . The other thing it identified for us when we were talking about problems and where we should go for the future, I mentioned earlier that we had trouble with some of those and it became clear to us that we hadn't resolved some issues. I can speak in particular of the x Faculty that there really were issues that the Faculty had not resolved and therefore we found it difficult to come up with where we were going because there was no consensus. So stemming from PACCR has been some internal changes. I know that at the x level we are looking at the curriculum. Not that it took PACCR to identity the problems because we did have them but it seems now that we might focus a little bit differently on our outcome of them knowing that we've been through PACCR. Some of the weaknesses we identified. We thought, well they're weaknesses. We'd better start

> working on them. . . . It did generate some self-study that's gone beyond after PACCR. We are in fact planning a curriculum revision which had already been on the surface but PACCR helped to clarify some of the issues. 6/10/2, 3, 4

The self-study served as a mechanism for acquainting staff with the history, goals and future directions of the Faculty and also helped to highlight the need for a more formal orientation for new Faculty. Apart from this, the experience afforded staff a more holistic view of their unit. The need to seek information from others and interact at the retreat were particularly useful for bridging gaps in communication. Lesley identified these benefits for the Faculty.

> People left [the retreat] with a more extensive cohesiveness than we've had for a while. 6/11/3

> Because we work in different programs and different years, and are caught up in our own little world, we forget to see the Faculty as a whole. This was one of the great benefits. I learnt about the program and what people are doing. . . . Just seeing some of the history. . . . The chance to force us to communicate with each other about some of the things we were doing. 6/11/10

Daisy too noted that the self-study facilitated development of a rounded perspective of the Faculty. She said, "Faculty got a sense of a wholeness of what's going on rather than the insular I teach my class type of thing and that" 8/11/7.

Another benefit related to systems within the unit. Daisy noted that "the process was helpful because it showed us the kind of the information that we weren't keeping, that we thought we ought to keep. It helped improve our on-line system of keeping track of [our work]" 6/10/1.

This internal look at themselves did cause some collective self-reflection. Looking at the data available for perusal, both documented and undocumented, some participants gained an appreciation of themselves as a group and a better understanding of some of the dynamics of the organization of which they were a part. Adelman (1984) noted that, through evaluation, "the differentiation and distribution of knowledge and power becomes clearer. Some people, not necessarily those in formal positions in the structure, have

crucial knowledge and power, whilst others are less significant in defining and regulating the accountability and management" (p. 5). The self-study served this function for Zoe who said, "I think I saw some of the players and the way things. . . . I have a little clearer sense of why things happen the way they do" 7/22/2.

Lesley's comments in this regard were

> if [there's] nothing more than writing this report or doing this report, . . . the self-study has been helpful. It made us see that we're not as bad as we sometimes say that we are and that we certainly do have some strengths and things that people need to be aware of. If nothing more, it does provide time for self-reflection as a Faculty. And that's one of its purposes. . . . I'm not sure if that will be done by all Faculty members. I think it is probably done by the people who were actually involved in the report and people who had done some work at the retreat. 6/26/6

> I think one of the good things I saw coming from that is we also realized that we have some really good things about us and that this was an opportunity to tell the world about those too. I think that has been really good and that positive sense that came out of the retreat. 8/12(1)/9

The timing of the self-study was seen by some participants as fortuitous for the incoming Dean. Meryl saw the report as allowing her "to see at a glance everything there is to know about the Faculty" 5/28/2. As "a nice summary of the present Deanship" 6/10/4, Daisy saw the report acting as a guide for the new Dean rather than a constraint on initiatives. She said that

> it sort of ended an era and began a new one. In that sense it was good timing. If it had come after the new Dean, it might have been difficult running under two different reins in two different directions and it might have been difficult to present it. In that sense, the timing was excellent. 6/10/4

The final benefit which will be discussed relates to the unit - university community relationship. Some participants found it a useful tool for communicating their concerns. Lesley's comment exemplifies this belief. She said, "It's a good vehicle to bring some of your concerns and issues to the university community and the President. This is how we've got here, why we see it as a concern and how it does permeate the program. We've tried to do that in terms of our concerns" 6/26/6.

The experience of self-study was beneficial for some participants. It allowed a better appreciation of the Faculty as a whole both in terms of history and the dynamics within the Faculty, promoted a sense of greater cohesiveness, allowed some of the gaps in data to be identified and reinforced the need for orientation of staff to the unit. However, not everyone benefited to the same degree from the self-study. For, as Meryl reflected, "I'm not sure really if the process was experienced sufficiently by everybody. I rather suspect that it's only meaningful for a very few of us except for the retreat" 6/25/5.

I. Reactions to the Self-Study

The self-study was an opportunity for members of the unit to examine where they had come from, where they were and where they would like to go. What actually transpired led to a better appreciation of the Faculty, highlighting some of the unit's strengths but also revealing, for some, some of the points of departure for themselves within the Faculty.

As discussed earlier, the report was compiled in stages. Firstly, an outline was prepared by one Faculty member, discussed by the Executive Committee and Faculty. Secondly, sections of the report were assigned to sub-committees, the leaders of which decided on an appropriate strategy for data collection and writing. The process of creation of the report was one which called for collaboration among members of sub-committees, Faculty members in general (requests for information and at the retreat) and the small team which was responsible for finalizing the report after the retreat.

Different participants had different reactions to the self-study. One of the reactions was to question whether real self-study had been done. Zoe whose major involvement occurred at the retreat said,

> Maybe that's why at the retreat we couldn't do self-study because if we really did self-study there we might end up with a report that we're having much discussion in this area which indicates that Faculty have different opinions about things and if that kind of report went out to the larger community they may say, maybe there's something wrong with the Faculty. I don't know what that means. It may look

> like criticism. Maybe that is why there's no choice in the process. Because the self-study was not truly a self-study. It was writing a report. 7/22/6

Zoe identified some conditions which she felt needed to be in place to effect true self-study. She said,

> I think we can have a lot of academic independence and still study ourselves but it takes a bit of trust in each other and time. And maybe it's time that we don't have and it's trust we don't have but it might have to do with time. Everyone feels so pressured to get their own work done and it's a real pressure because everyone is working hard. 7/22/5

> Guess in order to do self-study, there'd have to be some sense of self and I'm not sure that Faculty has that sense, where they are. Maybe. Again before self-study really can happen there might be a need to come to grips as a group about what the purpose of self-study is. I don't know if self-study really could be the start of something good. Could be the opening to growth and possibility but it has to come within a real sense of respect and trust for other people. . . . We do need to take stock. . . . Sometimes we have to be reminded of it but only in an environment of trust. 7/22/11

> The feeling is that you have to tell that everything's all right. You have to give the impression that everything is going well and that there's some cohesiveness. It makes one think that conflict, or discussion, or working through things is not something we're really striving for. And yet that has to be what we're striving for. Because in order to learn anything we have to go through that. It seems like a contradiction. 7/22/6

This concern about whether true self-study had been done is also alluded to by Meryl who indicated that the process might have been more meaningful for "very few of us except for the retreat." The stages in preparation of the report gave rise to different levels of involvement, selection of the different perspectives which could be advanced and considered as well as to the definition of what constitutes self-study. Meryl opined that

> I don't think we went far enough in involving people in the process. But then, there's a dilemma, isn't there? I mean to what extent can you afford the time to do that? Like true decentralization of decision. It takes time and it's costly. And when people have other priorities that come up towards the end of term, the necessity to get examinations out, papers marked and so on, it's hard to get people's attention. 6/25/5

She raised valid questions which only the members of the unit could answer.

Daisy too presented a dilemma faced by the Faculty in its attempt at involving the wider Faculty in the planning process. She noted that

> [The Executive] came up with the straw man, the dummy table and then we reacted. And to me, that was a much more facilitative way to do it than to have a general Faculty meeting and say now where do we go. In fact, I think we had started with that and found out that nobody knew what to do really, what PACCR was or what we should do or had any idea. And it was decided in Faculty that, in fact, Executive should take it on and look at some of the PACCR reports and see what it entailed and come up with a straw man and we could go from there. We're used to doing that in nursing. We use straw men all the time. 6/10/1

The attempt to involve the wider Faculty in the planning of the self-study was abortive. This resulted because they had no clear idea of what the process hoped to achieve, what it entailed or how to proceed. Rather than invest the time and effort to clarify these questions and devise an effective mechanism for involving the wider Faculty at the initial stages, the decision was taken to leave the task to the Executive.

Zoe touched on the element of time as being a possible constraint on the conduct of true self-study, an element which Meryl referred to above. Lesley said, "I don't think anybody wanted to do it because of the time it would take. But we did it anyway because it was an expectation that we accepted" 6/11/5. She later said that

> whenever you want to do some serious self-study, I think the time is the biggest constraint to doing that. I don't think it's lack of commitment and concern about who and what we are and what the product is and the quality of our work. I think it's time. People just really don't want to commit more time because you don't have any. 8/12(1)/5

Indeed, both Nancy and Zoe were happy not to have had greater involvement because of the pressure of work with which they were engaged. Nancy said, "I guess I was glad not to have had [more input]. While the process of management and administration and the evaluation process interest me very much, given my work load at this point, I was glad not to have anymore work to do" 5/29/3.

Lesley's notion that the self-study was something that had to be done was, in a way, supported by Theresa who said, "It was just part of whatever. . . . My business is writing. . . . It was one more writing project" 5/21(1)/1, 3. This "writing project" which

Theresa also said was done as an add on by everyone involved, called for their extra effort. Daisy's reaction was

> I wouldn't want to go out and say therefore it was no imposition because we did this all the time because I would be wrong in implying that because self-study or self-evaluation is germane to nursing that in fact we just did this and it was nothing to get it together. It was a lot to get it together and I think the difference is that when you are doing self-study or self-evaluation, you tend to pick out those areas where you have a problem. 8/11/5

Andrea saw the self-study as "a list of competing agendas" 5/21(2)/2.

These reactions reflect the varying possibilities and demands of self-study from the perspectives of participants. Self-study as report writing, the view advanced by Theresa contrasted with Zoe's view of something other than a report. Andrea's "list of competing agendas" seems related to Zoe's concern for clarity of purpose and sense of self. The essence of time to enable true self-study against the experience of pressure of work as well as the desire of PACCR to have the self-study completed on time seemed to work against a self-study which could possibly have embraced the involvement of a wider cross-section of the Faculty earlier in the process.

These reactions are supplemented by the benefits perceived to have accrued from the process, benefits such as gaining a more holistic view of the Faculty from an historical standpoint, understanding "why things happen the way they do," getting to know some of the other Faculty better and gaining a better appreciation of the strengths of the Faculty.

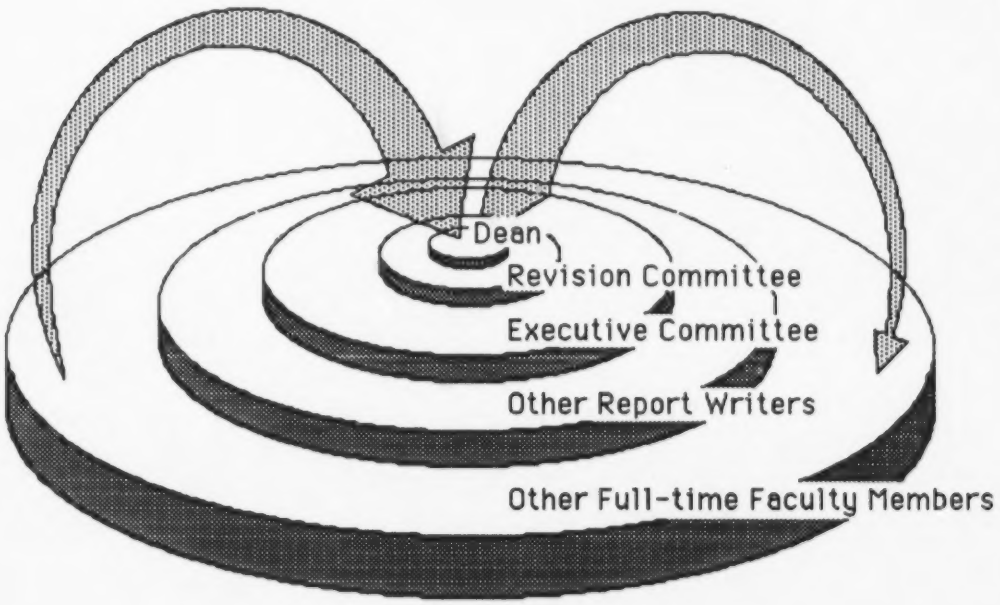
The design of the self-study and the resulting processes led Meryl to say that only a few of the staff may have found the self-study meaningful. What this and the other reactions as well as the perceived benefits reveal is that a mechanism for integrating the multiple perspectives within the unit <u>through</u> rather <u>in</u> self-study is needed.

J. <u>Emerging Understanding</u>

Reflection on the initiation, organization and execution of the self-study in the participating unit revealed that the process was a multi-stage one. It was evident that the

Dean was the unit's first line of contact with PACCR. At subsequent stages of the self-study, the group of Faculty members involved increased until the retreat was held. After the retreat, the number of persons involved decreased. Figure 1 depicts levels of involvement in the self-study process.

Figure 1. Levels of Involvement in the Self-Study Process



The Dean was the pivotal character in the self-study process. The revising committee of three, which included the Dean, was the next most significant group since its members were responsible for the final version of the report. The Executive Committee as a group was charged with the design of the strategy for self-study and the preparation of the draft report. Its members had more collective input than other members of the Faculty. The fourth group of Faculty members comprised those persons who were not members of the Executive Committee but who were members of work groups. These persons had

more opportunity for input into the self-study report than those in the fifth group which consisted of the persons who provided information to members of the work groups, participated in the retreat or did not contribute to the self-study in any way.

The reality of differential involvement is significant since the opportunity for input into the self-study as well as the results of the process were contingent on the degree of involvement. As indicated in Figure 1, input increased with proximity to the centre (representing the seat of authority) while output factors such as involvement and understanding of the process decreased with distance from the centre. At the same time, the existence of the mulitple perspectives characteristic of any organization meant that at each stage of involvement the degree of input and output varied.

Therefore, as involvement increased, so did the amount of time invested in the process, knowledge base and the commitment to the endeavour. In other words, there was incremental involvement in the self-study based on the group with which each Faculty member was associated. There was also a relationship between the degree of input into the process and the understanding of the process in the present context, the expectations of the process, commitment to and ownership of the self-study. In fact, the output factors of identification with the process, the ability to see benefits as deriving from it, the opportunity to contribute the self-study and believing that true self-study had been conducted were, in part, related to proximity to the point of creation and recreation of the self-study report.

The approach to the self-study adopted in the participating unit seemed related to unit structure, processes and philosophy. The use of a committee which was an integral part of the unit structure as the self-study steering committee, the importance given to the input from knowledgeable individuals, the fact that the influence of senior people was acknowledged and the emphasis placed on reporting on the research achievements of the Faculty, in terms of the work of both Faculty members and students, attest to this.

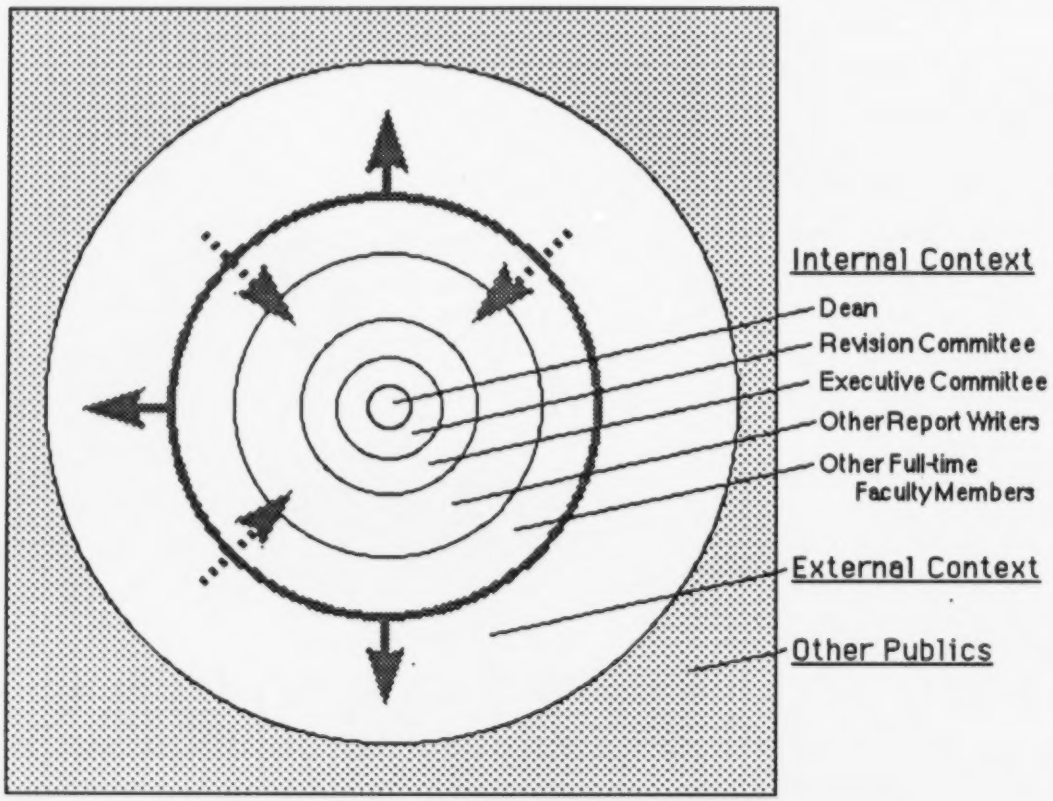
The significance of this scenario is that at each level of involvement, information was filtered and interpreted creating opportunity for reframing of the image was being projected. As a result, there were varied reactions to the process with levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction being voiced. For example, Andrea reported that her submission was rewritten and that what was included in the draft report was inaccurate. Frances said that she had to constantly check to ensure that what was being included in the report did indeed reflect what existed. Zoe felt that she did not know beforehand the agenda of the retreat and so went there ready to contribute only to find that her interests were not being addressed. Ethel, on the other hand, indicated that the Executive Committee had agreed that the retreat would be devoted to working on the draft report and involving the wider Faculty.

The description of the self-study and experiences of the nine participants also made clearer the importance of two of the contexts of the self-study alluded to in chapter 1. One was the internal context consisting of the full-time Faculty and the other the external context which included PACCR, the university administration and the Unit Review Committee. Figure 2 presents this conceptualization. Figure 2 recognizes the existence of other publics included among those whose interests the program review process was intended to serve.

A number of counteracting perspectives which influenced the self-study were at play within the internal context. The most cogent ones are discussed below.

One such perspective related to the political position within the Faculty. It appears that the perspectives of the newcomers and more junior staff within the unit were in contrast to those of the senior people. The senior people were perceived to occupy a position of power gained through experience and knowledge. This legitimated their essential contributions to the self-study process and product.

Figure 2. Contexts of the Self-Study



Another related to ownership of the self-study with the Dean being projected as the person who had made the greatest contribution to the self-study report and as Meryl said, probably had the most knowledge about the Faculty. While some participants did consider that the self-study had been conducted for the Faculty as a whole, there was the distinct impression that the fact that the report was to be examined by an external audience influenced the content.

The notion that the self-study was an evaluation of the Faculty of Nursing and not of individuals within the Faculty facilitated an "objective" assessment of the unit in the eyes of participants. This, Daisy claimed, prevented the placing of blame on any individual thus

allowing a safe distance to be established between the Faculty members and the object of evaluation. This stance has rendered the self-study less potent as a strategy for change than is inherently possible through evaluation.

Nursing as a profession and an academic discipline has encountered essential tensions. The concern as a caring enterprise, combined with the requirements of classroom teaching and clinical practice, have had to be balanced against tenets of academe seen as research and publishing. In the participating unit, the research focus has surfaced as the emphasis, signifying a push to conform to the perceived requirements of the wider environment. It has also resulted in creation of a climate which is willing to accommodate a specific type of individual, one committed to the research orientation. This was made evident by participants and the attention paid to this facet in the self-study report. Again, seniority within the Faculty came into play since this status is gained largely by how prolifically Faculty members addressed the requirements of research and publication.

It was clear that, had some participants been given the choice, they would not have participated actively in the self-study. The task was accepted because it was a requirement of the university. The costs of participation on an individual basis in light of the climate in which the self-study was conducted, that is, the importance of research for salary increments, promotion and tenure decisions, need to be considered carefully. Participants sacrificed research advancements, professional development opportunities as well as personal activities to be able to complete the self-study. On the other hand, they did realize some benefits. These included a better understanding of the Faculty as a whole, increased cohesiveness and the directions for the future in terms of data management. However, it is possible that these could have been achieved through some mechanism other than the approach to self-study used. Indeed, Meryl noted that the self-study may not be very meaningful for people other than those greatly involved in writing the report. She also

stated that more could have been achieved if the process had been designed to ensure involvement of a greater number of Faculty members.

Participants addressed a number of possibilities of self-study. Nancy said that evaluation is about opening up rather than closure, closure closely resembling the focus on production of a self-study report. Daisy saw self-study as an opportunity for self-reflection and action towards problem solving. Though she felt that some of this had occurred, the possibility of this approach did not pervade the self-study. Zoe held the latter view of self-study. She also saw the process as an opportunity to go beyond what can be reported. Lesley saw self-study as a cohesion building opportunity.

The experience of involvement in the self-study was different for the nine participants. In spite of these differences, for the most part, they benefited in some way. While there was some measure of satisfaction with the experience, the possibilities of the opportunity were not explored as much as they could have been. In considering what would be needed to enable true self-study, participants identified the need for trust, a clear sense of self, shared purpose of self-study, respect within the unit and time to undertake the tasks involved.

The self-study, as part of a wider process of program review, was introduced by the university administration acting on a mandate of the Board of Governors. In this regard, the unit was required to engage in activities in order to achieve the objectives of this body. PACCR, as a member of the external context, gave direction to the unit in its conduct of the self-study. Members of the unit in turn interpreted those directions. The flexibility allowed by PACCR was tempered by subtle suggestions to which the unit adhered.

The Unit Review Committee was an integral part of the wider process. Their mandate from PACCR was to report on the state of the unit's programs, human and material resources and relationships with other constituents. This committee was also

charged with the task of assessing the effectiveness of the unit's current operations and its plans for the future. Members of the unit chose to present themselves in a manner which was considered by the more influential Faculty as being appropriate for an external audience. The report, then, served to some extent as a protective shell for the Faculty. Some members, however, assigned to the URC the role of mediator as a means of addressing differences which existed within the Faculty.

The description of the self-study and the experiences shared by the nine participants led to a better understanding of the conceptualization of self-study within the unit. They revealed influences on the process and product and gave indications of some possibilities for self-study. They also revealed that some elements of the mosaic were not addressed in the self-study. That of the other publics was not discussed in any depth. However, elements of another aspect of self were. These are addressed in chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6

Who We Are: A Portrait of Nursing

A. Introduction

As the participants shared their experience of the self-study process, several issues which form part of the mosaic of nursing and that of the unit emerged. Six of these which recurred will be addressed in this chapter. These issues give an indication of how participants view the Faculty and the profession of which they are a part and how this context interfaced with their self-study. In other words, participants continued the process of self-study as they reflected on the experience with their diverse perspectives continuing to add colour to the story being told.

B. The Nature of Nursing

Having entered the academic environment later than many other disciplines, nursing has tried to adapt to the demands of its new environment while still maintain some of the elements and flavours of the old. The transition has not always been a smooth one and there continue to be restraints and hesitancies on some fronts to confront change.

The nature of nursing itself was seen to place limits on the conduct of self-study within the unit. That nature was depicted by participants as comprising a stance of resistance to change, the components of nursing in an academic setting--teaching, research, scholarly activities and clinical practice, its emphasis on detail and structure and the fact that evaluation is considered an integral part of nursing. These characteristics identified have influenced the unit's approach to the self-study.

In considering what possibilities existed for the Faculty through the self-study process, the bent of nursing was seen to place restrictions on how far the Faculty would go. Nancy stated,

> I would have liked to have seen more vision. Dream dreams. . . . Nursing does not work that way. Nursing does not move ahead with great courageous leaps or hasn't traditionally. I see more of that now. People are really moving, but still

> they're moving within that structured nursing style of thinking which is one, two, three and it's not very heavy on the art. It's much more enchanted by quantitative research than qualitative or literature or philosophy. . . . I think they should dream the dream and claim the territory and not wait so much for Advanced Education funding the [PhD] program. . . . Maybe we've gotten too used to having adequate funding for everything we do. And that limits the creativity. And you don't want things so creative that you're not going to have a good product or an integrated structure. 5/29/3, 4

Lesley noted that "we still continue to do things that research has shown aren't the best but it's because we've always done it that way. We can't change too quickly" 6/26/8. These views suggest that nursing is an area of endeavour which is ruled by structure and slow to change.

The self-study was an opportunity for the Faculty of Nursing to make known its distinctiveness, a distinctiveness that has posed problems for the Faculty as it tried to fulfil its functions. Like the rest of the university community, Faculty members are required to engage in teaching, research and scholarly activities. Nursing though has a clinical component which requires supervision of students on field placement, a feature which is absent from the majority of units in the institution, medicine and education being others with such a component. Therefore, the self-study addressed that multidimensional facet of the Faculty. Lesley pointed out that

> [nursing] has the Art and Science components so we try to portray in the self-study that we've paid attention to both sorts of aspects, . . . that, yes, we are researchers and scientists in that one light but then we have that other part, the practitioner part, that caring part that makes up nursing. That's the part that's more difficult to get across in this type of review. 6/11/6, 7

She emphasized that "we need to let people know some of the things that as a profession we must be in tune with, like entry to practice. Though we're a Faculty in a university, we can't ignore the fact that we're also a practice profession" 6/11/9.

Another aspect of the field of nursing was the attention paid to detail. Frances said, "We don't miss much. We're very detailed, I would have to say and in a way picky for that reason" 8/12(2)/14. This focus is reflected in the organization of the self-study as well

as aspects of the self-study report and has influenced the structure of the programs in the Faculty. Daisy acknowledged this as an integral and necessary part of nursing but questioned the pertinence of the degree to which such attention to detail is paid.

> We've had to be more careful so to speak that when our graduates go out that they can't make errors. You can't have people who would make a medication error. Whereas if you're in sociology, if you make a spelling error, the cost is not so profound. So we tend to have all sorts of checks and balances. And it would be there in medicine and everything else. It's not unique to nursing. . . . I want to make it clear that I don't feel that this very precise, 473 objectives, operationalized with 4 measurements for each is the way it ought to be. I'm saying that we're more like that than not like that. And I think it would be very good, would be helpful if somebody from the outside could demonstrate to us that to be like that is not advanced. Because I do think that we have more checks and balances, we have more people involved in things than other Faculties do. And that's very time consuming. Nurses are very democratic and we hold meetings to discuss it. You don't like that objective, let's discuss how it ought to read. We have other Faculties where the Dean says this is the objective, you go out there and do it. And they don't care. Part of it is part of nursing but I don't want to leave you with the impression that I think that it is good. There is probably some common ground. And we are probably at one end of the continuum and we probably don't need to be that far. 8/11/11

Evaluation too was considered an integral part of nursing. Not only were Faculty engaged in student evaluation and peer review for salary, promotion and tenure decisions, but quality assurance was intertwined as an aspect of the clinical component of the process. As a matter of fact, Meryl stated that because of nurses' involvement with quality assurance, there should have been a "fair amount of interest" in the self-study 5/28/6. Other participants addressed the importance of evaluation in their unit.

> Ethel: We teach so much of self-evaluation, you see. That's one of the things of the program. We're teaching them to be accountable and to set their own goals and priorities and continue their education and all those kinds of things that are a part of what we teach. . . . So this is part of the process. 6/4/6

> Daisy: I think that the review process is essentially a sound process that all of us go through. We go through it at the end of every year. We go through it at the end of every course. Faculty of Nursing members generally pay a great deal of attention to student evaluations and certainly the Faculty Salaries and Promotions Committee pay a lot of attention to student evaluation which is one small measure of what's going on. So I think that as professionals and professional nurses we are very, very used to constant evaluation. We've grown up with it. We were evaluated every time we did anything and this evaluation was used as part of our education. So it is something that is not new at all to nurses. And I think maybe we even go

> overboard to some extent on it but it certainly isn't a new process to us. And many of us feel that whether we are research oriented or not, that program evaluation is essential. And that indeed there shouldn't be a program funded that doesn't have an evaluation component to it. This is in a way an evaluation component that might not have been there if PACCR hadn't come along. It might be inherent in the university but might not have been manifested if the review hadn't come along. The self-evaluation, the review process, the reflection on where we're going, what we've done, how well we've done it, where we ought to go in the future is inherent in nursing. 6/10/6

> Daisy: I think that it's sometimes hard for some of us in nursing to understand this simply because that's so much a part of nursing. The request to go through PACCR is not unlike what one does every year in one's career in nursing. . . . But it wasn't a foreign object for our Faculty because we are constantly, I mean, we are revising curriculum *ad nauseum*. . . . The nursing background is very steeped in self-evaluation. It's a very germane part of our upbringing, self-evaluation. 8/11/4

It is evident that within the Faculty, evaluation is considered essential and integrated into the fabric of their world of nursing. The fact that evaluation was seen to be inherent in nursing, seemed to influence participants' attitude to the self-study. The assumption that because of their familiarity with evaluation, and especially self-evaluation according to Ethel, staff were equipped to conduct unit self-study in this instance was inferred.

While the Faculty had had experience with curriculum review, engaging in this type of activity resulted in competing agendas, one inherent in nursing and the other inherent in the academic environment. Frances had this to say: "My experience with any nursing Faculties is that they tend to change curriculum a great deal as opposed to other Faculties in the university community. Now I think there's some rationale for that. On the other hand, it does impede the development of scholarly activities when you constantly undergo curriculum review" 8/12(2)/9.

Daisy noted that "we are constantly, I mean, we are revising curriculum *ad nauseum*. Other Faculties look at us and say, for god sakes, why are you still on the curriculum? Get off the ground and do something" 8/11/4. For Zoe, the curriculum was one of the issues which she considered needed to be discussed as part of the self-study. If curriculum review is considered to introduce conflict between the essential purposes of the

profession and those of the academic setting and provoke a negative image of the Faculty, it seems likely then that its inclusion in self-study of this nature is mitigated. For what is at stake is the image held of the Faculty by others as well as its self-image.

The image which Nursing Faculty have of themselves as professionals and academics has no doubt coloured their collective identity. Lesley's thought that "we don't present a united front in nursing to the world, as a profession" 6/11/8 could be a reflection of the point of evolution and the attempt to blend professional and academic worlds. For as was noted earlier, change occurs slowly in nursing thus leading to a situation where people are at different and, possibly, conflicting points of development. Zoe expressed this view.

> I guess I think that we are narrow and part of that narrowness is related to the fact that we don't as a profession open ourselves up to criticism very much. For example, we don't have seminars within the Faculty where we challenge each other where I think they do in some other Faculties. I don't know why. I think it's because we're afraid either to challenge someone else or to be challenged by colleagues. 7/22/7

The nature of nursing as seen by participants influenced the self-study in various ways. The attitude to change was seen as influencing the reliance on what was familiar and concrete. The attention to detail was evidenced in the self-study plan and the self-study report. The conviction that evaluation is inherent in nursing was the element of the nature of nursing which had the greatest influence on the self-study. It seems that because of this conviction, the approach taken to the self-study was one which addressed what was known and within control (the use of a structure which was "tied in with our programs. It followed the organization of the Faculty" Meryl, 5/28/1). This limited the opportunity available to Faculty to go beyond the known and to engage in a more in-depth self-evaluation.

C. Image and Status of Nursing

The image and status of nursing perceived by participants to be held by others influenced, to some extent, the content of the self-study report. An effort was made to

show what had been achieved within the Faculty and the contributions which had been made to the university community and the nursing community--locally, nationally and internationally. This opportunity to tell the world about themselves as a group was seized. However, a number of factors influenced the underutilization of the opportunity.

The image and status of nursing have been significantly influenced by the field's association with medicine and the fact that it has traditionally been a field pursued primarily by women (Allen, 1985). These two factors have contributed to an undervaluation of the profession. Combined with this has been the struggle which had to be engaged and continues to be engaged with regard to the appropriateness of nursing as an academic discipline. Lesley expressed the view that "you're doubly bound to be lower than everybody else" because it is a female Faculty and because it is nursing 6/26/2. According to Daisy,

> There is a general feeling amongst us that nursing is not considered to be a very, you know, when Faculty have to really worry about, keep them quiet. They're nice little girls and that we do lack power in the whole university environment although we were able to get our PhD program approved. In terms of the President and Dean of Graduate Studies, there is great appreciation of the Faculty of Nursing and it really isn't dumped upon but other Departments don't feel the same. 6/10/7

The association of nursing with medicine continues to be made. Daisy said,

> There's so much tradition steeped in that that even if you are independent, they see you as part of medicine anyway. Whether historically 40 years ago you actually were a part of medicine and now you're not or you weren't 40 years ago is immaterial. I think because the overriding thing is that society believes nursing to be a subgroup of medicine and that's the overriding thing. So whether you are or not, people perceive you as being that. 6/10/8

Only Meryl felt that a clear distinction had been made between nursing and medicine by the establishment of a separate Faculty of Nursing 6/25/4. This persistent overshadowing by medicine has lead to Frances voicing this self-perception.

> . . . because I think we've always felt inferior in terms of any situation. Medicine has always been superior, and in the university community we feel inferior because we haven't produced as much research and publications and so whenever we take on something, we do it with great gusto. 8/12(2)/17

The lack of understanding of nursing as a discipline has posed problems for the Faculty. It was considered difficult for others to identify or understand some of the needs of the Faculty. One such example relates to their research needs.

> Meryl: Trying to persuade people that we need research space. It is a perception as well. Do nurses do research? And if they do, what kind of research do they do? And why on earth would they need space? There are those kinds of perceptions among the other disciplines with whom we have to try and negotiate space for ourselves. 6/25/3

> Lesley: Part of it is because people don't understand what nursing is like. Many people, including nurses don't perceive nursing has any place in the university. And certainly some of our colleagues are the same way. They don't understand that research space is something among the needs of nurses. 8/12(1)/8

> Andrea: We have a struggle for research space. 5/21(2)/2

The Faculty has responded to its perception of its image in a number of ways. One is by focusing on the quality of its staff. One goal of the Faculty was to have a majority of doctorially prepared staff. A measure of success of achievement of this objective and future plans in this regard are indicated below. Ethel pointed out that

> . . . now that we've increased our doctorially prepared in this Faculty from 7 to 21 in 5 years. That's pretty good. That is a goal and the Faculty accepted. That's the way we need to go. They know that's important for nursing. . . . The majority have those plans. So those goals are very clear. But I think the directions are set. This Faculty has built up quite a reputation in terms of research development and the first doctoral program that was approved in Canada. They are recognized. I think they like that and I think they know where they're going. It determines who you recruit. And we want a centre of excellence in nursing. Have to be constantly studying where you are and where you're going. And you have new Faculty coming in. They have to know what the goals are and decide whether they want to come here. 6/4/9

Another response has been the desire to mount the first doctoral program in Canada. Gaining approval for the program was seen as a thorough and lengthy process. Ethel noted that

> we had the proposal ready in '85. So that was pretty fast work too. And then we had all these levels to go through in the university. But it started with review in '85 and it took almost a year to get all those reviews done. And then the approval by the Board of Governors was in [May] 1986. . . . There were really 10 levels of approval for that program within the university with all the different committees that get involved, which is a good thing. 6/4/4

The Faculty approached the task of seeking approval with aplomb. In describing the proposal, Daisy stated,

> I have compared our PhD proposal which went forward to the university with other PhD proposals or other program proposals and it stands clear that we go into these things, by and large, in much greater detail, more systematically and in some sense a lot of people from other Faculties would tend to say we just get too involved and we do too much for heaven sakes. I'm sure that some of that criticism is justified. But the PhD proposal was just an outstanding document. There's just no question in my mind about it. It was so outstanding that it became a model for other Faculties to use. It wasn't just three paragraphs saying. . . . And for some Faculties, they can make it with three paragraphs because they are so, use an example like medicine, you know. They don't have to fight for things. If the doctor says it must be, then it must be. So in nursing, we've tended to do more of that kind of thing. 8/11/10, 11

In fact, the "great gusto" with which the proposal for the PhD program was prepared was applied in preparation of the self-study report.

The introduction of the first PhD program in nursing in Canada was seen as having a positive effect on the Faculty of Nursing itself but also on the university as a whole. With regard to the Faculty, the benefits to be accrued included

> improving the quality, depth, and range of research investigation and related research endeavours and training opportunities; expanding the quality and range of clinical and research expertise; and attracting an increased number of outstanding academic staff with interest in joint appointments between faculties and in shared-cost Faculty-health care agency appointments focusing on clinical research. (Faculty of Nursing, 1987, pp. 30 - 31)

With regard to the university, benefits were articulated thus:

> The impact of the PhD in Nursing program on the research potential of the University is perceived as placing the University at the vanguard of nursing research in Canada; providing a "health and illness nursing care" research emphasis to complement the already substantially developed health and illness medical cure and diagnostic research thrusts at this university. (Faculty of Nursing, 1987, p. 31)

The desire to introduce a PhD program influenced the content of the self-study report. Meryl said, "That whole wanting to achieve that goal of getting the first PhD program in Canada has definitely influenced the extent to which we have documented that in our

report, I would say. . . . We're working on it [the image of nursing as an academic discipline]" 6/25/4.

The image of nursing as inferior, bound by structure and non-academic, has persisted despite the strides which the field has made in the advancement of knowledge and practice. This image appears to be one from which some want to distance themselves. Zoe said,

> I always feel good when someone says, "Oh I didn't think you were a nurse. I didn't know you were a nurse." I expect them to see a nurse in a certain way. Oh good, I'm not seen as that rigid person who maybe I see too as a nurse. Yet, it's not. In a way I think I'm being critical of myself as a nurse and I've taken on the world view of nursing and said, yes, that's the way nurses are and I don't want to be part of it and yet I've chosen to return to the field of nursing because ultimately I believe in the qualities that make nursing what it is. 7/22/8,9

Why have this image and the issue of status persisted? Theresa opined,

> I think the women's movement too has to come to appreciate nursing and also teaching because these were traditional fields for women. Activists in the women's movement often don't realize how those fields have changed for women and I think they are part of the rich tradition of women's work. To ignore them is to denigrate them - throwing out the baby with the bath water. 7/29/7

In other words, women themselves are seen as perpetuating the perception of nursing as a profession of low value. Interestingly enough, even within the ranks of nursing is there some doubt about the place of nursing in the university. Lesley said,

> Nursing as a discipline and as a profession influences some of the things we try to emphasize. People don't see nursing and nurses as a discipline. People within nursing don't think of it as a discipline. We try to show, yes, we are researchers and scientists on that one light but then we have that other part, the practitioner part, that caring part that makes up nursing. . . . We're always trying to be as good as or better than or have higher expectations of other Faculties. Don't think we want to be like men. . . . We do struggle, we do have higher expectations for ourselves. . . . It [femaleness] makes a difference. 6/11/6, 7

These perceptions of the image of nursing and of its place in the university reflect issues which Zoe felt should have been addressed during self-study but were not. Daisy noted that

> we didn't sit down, we didn't have a good session on, you know, where should nursing be. Again, it may not have been necessary. Most of us are very much

> involved in the professional nurses association. We have had opportunities there, as nurses and as professionals, we have opportunities all the time to talk about the future and where we're going. 8/11/9

However, if Zoe's view is an adequate example, maybe on the other hand, the opportunities within the professional association had not resolved the issues for members of the unit. It is possible that some members of the unit had not benefited from those opportunities and that such discussions within the context of the unit would have yielded more focused understandings. It may also have helped to orient staff to the unit and helped in the building of cohesiveness as well.

While Meryl did opine that nursing has succeeded in removing itself from the shadow of medicine, this perception has persisted for others. As an issue of concern, attention was focused on what was needed to have nursing accepted within the university. Participants indicated that adequate research funds and space would assist the Faculty in its quest to emerge as a unit of note.

D. Women as Nurses, Nurses as Women

Theresa described nursing as "part of the rich tradition of women's work" 7/29/7, a fact which it was felt is not valued by many. Zoe and Daisy purported that the devaluation stems from the societal view of the role of women which advocates woman as nurturer. That both being female and nursing are premised on the essence of care-giving colours, the reality of the staff members of the Faculty of Nursing. Participants saw their Faculty as different with staff facing a double bind in terms of their attempts to balance their professional and personal, family lives as well as in terms of their "status" in relation to medicine. As a result of wanting to achieve and be recognized, nurses "try harder," Lesley said 6/11/9. Participants had this to say regarding their lot as nurses and women.

> Daisy: The Faculty of Nursing is different on two counts. One, they are women and it is different being a woman and being a professor. Faculties that have a small proportion of women don't have the same problems that we have. Women have families and they have to look after their families. And that's not true in male-dominated Faculties. So not only do we have that but we have lack of research

> funds for the profession of nursing which is somewhat maybe a women's issue, maybe a nursing issue. It's maybe probably both issues. 6/10/7, 8

> Lesley: And the fact that in society women are still seen as being mothers and childrearers and that, for many Faculty, causes a dilemma, balancing the two roles, homemaker and professional woman. 6/26/3

> Zoe: I think that a lot of it has to do with nursing perhaps. But I think it has its roots in the larger world. The fact that nursing has always been women's work and a caring profession which is not, in the larger picture, highly valued just like much of women's work is not particularly highly valued. And so now when we want to be seen as a profession or the same status as medicine, for example, there's this real striving to be like them in terms of research abilities and scholarly activities. And that to be seen as, I think there's a lot of emphasis in the Faculty to prove that we are broad and able and thoughtful. . . . And I think there's nothing wrong with that. I think that it's important that we are scholarly as a Faculty. I think that our approach to it has been to, now I think that this is way off-beat; perhaps it's my own thinking about it. I think it has to do with Women's Studies. The fact that we as women in Faculty never look at ourselves as women in the Faculty. I think that makes a difference to working together. The fact that we are all women. 7/22/7

> Frances: . . . especially a young profession like nursing which is female dominated where you have also the other side of the issue where the females also look after the children in the home setting. And I think that's another issue in nursing as such as opposed to business or wherever. 8/12(2)/12

> Daisy: At least we think we have a problem, certainly around power, hierarchy, which may have to do with female orientation, I don't know, with nursing. But there's a sense of that anyway. 8/11/7

There was support for both sides of the coin when participants considered whether the Faculty's being almost 100% female made a difference to the self-study. Theresa felt that she couldn't make inferences because "no data and no valid point of comparison" were available 7/29/3. Lesley drew attention to the fact that Home Economics has a large proportion of female Faculty which meant that nursing was not unique 6/26/1. Others did feel that this feature of the Faculty had made a difference.

> Zoe: We don't deal with the fact that we are women and that we have qualities to bring partly because we are women and partly because we're in a Faculty that does interest women, the kind of work that we do, that we have some kinds of things to offer the university and the world in terms of knowledge and scholarly behaviour. But we don't really capture that very well because we're trying very hard to be on par with the other professions. I don't know if that in fact is really true. It's an intuitive sense. . . . Women's experiences have not been fully understood in the light of the overall development of knowledge. Therefore we tend to see

> knowledge in one way. We could call it relational knowledge or the ability to understand people differently or nurturing. What is nurturing? How valuable is it to the development of knowledge? I don't know if it does but I have a sense that we as a society have not used that knowledge in a public way. It's more tied to the private. So that nursing will never be as accepted as medicine because the very way we live as nurses will never be held in as high esteem as the kind of medical knowledge that is finite and capturable. We talked a lot about nursing. What is caring? Those are things that are hard to define so we struggle to define something that we can't define in the same way as other knowledge can be defined. So we can't set up a research project that is going to explain what caring is because you can't do it that way. 7/22/7

> Frances: . . . but I very much think that probably there are some aspects of the PACCR review that would be done differently as a female-dominated discipline than in one either male-dominated or has a more even mixture of males and females. 8/12(2)/12

One way in which the traditional role of women as care givers affected participation in the self-study was in terms of ability to attend the retreat. Though this was not the only reason for non-attendance, it was figured among the reasons. Meryl addressed this issue thus.

> Some of the reasons why people were not there had to do with other academic commitments but much of it had to do with the care of children. I can't be away. That's time that I want to spend with my children. That's definitely a factor in terms of the extent to which people committed themselves to being away overnight at a retreat. . . . I don't think you see men saying I can't be away, only if his wife happened to be an academic and had to be away somewhere else. That's rare for a man to say I've got family commitments. 6/25/1, 2

Frances also addressed how the female composition of the staff influenced the Faculty.

> So I do think it makes a difference in how we approach most things. And even in the things that we might see as the strong values we want in our Faculty, I think being able to get along as people is still seen as a very strong value with women and in the Nursing Faculty that would not be as applicable to the social sciences where people can be very much individuals. We have to work much more as groups in nursing because we tend to teach in groups. We haven't quite gotten to doing research in groups but I think we'll move into that which would be to our advantage, I would add. But I think we do see group work as very important. . . . The new Dean came in and said everybody had to get a PhD and that put pressure on a lot of people and a few left, I think. Others have tried to fit it in. So we've got people doing PhDs, working full time, trying to do publishing and research. Many have young kids at home and a husband or are single parents. And even if they aren't parents, they still have the housework to do at home. So I think there is a very big difference and I think that there is a tremendous push right now for publishing and getting research. And we don't have very many journals in Canada

> to publish in. And we're lucky in Alberta we have AFNR but there are not many sources for us to get funding for research. 8/12(2)/13, 17

That nursing is a profession dominated by women was acknowledged. The significance of this fact was, however, not fully explored within the Faculty. The qualities brought to the profession and to the field of study by the uniqueness of female Faculty members are yet to be examined in a focused and positive light. Though some participants felt that the essence of femaleness influenced the self-study process, others refrained from subscribing to this viewpoint. Implications of the roles of women outside the work environment were also considered to be a counterpoint to the roles and expectation of performance within the institution. Perceptions of this aspect of the Faculty held by participants reinforced their self-image of being inferior and doubly bound.

E. The Issue of Space

The concern about inadequate space provisions was sounded stridently. This concern, one which affected the functioning of the Faculty, was voiced by participants and examined in detail in the self-study report. The reality of the space problem was evident in the fact that some staff were housed in the Clinical Sciences Building while others were housed in leased quarters in the Garneau Professional Centre. Additionally, teaching was carried out in negotiated space across campus. The physical division of the Faculty contributed to a perceived rift in the unit resulting in an internal problem of image. The Executive Committee functioning as the self-study steering committee comprised more people from the Clinical Sciences Building than from Garneau.

"We have had a terrible struggle for research space" 5/21(2)/2 was Andrea's cry, one which was repeated by many. Both Ethel and Daisy mentioned that this resource has had to be negotiated with the Faculty of Medicine 6/4/8; 6/10/8. Daisy felt that this had more to do with power than with need. It was felt that this concern was not understood generally, with the question "Why would the Faculty of Nursing need research space?"

being asked, a matter related to the image which participants perceived others held of the unit and the discipline. Meryl's and Lesley's comments are examples of this expressed concern.

> Meryl: The whole other is the space arrangement here. We're spread all over the place. We're divided in two buildings and also our laboratories are very small. Teaching areas for nursing skills are small. I think that will be unique to nursing. I think the kinds of space that we need, it's not as if we can do all we do in a bunch of little offices. And that too I think would have been addressed. The other thing is trying to persuade people that we need research space. 6/25/3

> Lesley: The big classes are held wherever they tell us to go. I think definitely some of the seminars and small groups and some of those types of things certainly would be held in Garneau. I've never gone over there for a class. Mine are in Dentistry/Pharmacy or places like this. . . . We don't have classroom facilities here within the Faculty to handle that load. And what ones we do, medicine gets first claim. . . . I think since the new Dean has come in medicine, [our Dean] has said there really has been some negotiation and the plan pretty well is decided now in terms of space. She's done a lot of work on that, an awful lot of work which hopefully will go down in the PACCR because this is one of the things that we want her to make a little stronger. 8/12(1)/7, 8

There was some uncertainty about whether the report would emphasize the problem enough. Andrea noted that "these things were not stressed as forcefully as they could be stressed in the first draft" 5/21(2)/2. Lesley said, "We have done things like hopefully make a strong case for the problems we have for space and the struggles we've been going through" 6/26/5. Indeed, seizing the opportunity to let the problem of inadequate space be reiterated, the report addressed extensively the needs of the Faculty for research, teaching and laboratory space. It covered the history of the struggle for space, the current position and future aspirations. However, it was noted that "there will still be a problem with the visibility of the Faculty of Nursing, which needs to be addressed when all the Faculty are housed together in the Clinical Sciences Building" (Faculty of Nursing, 1987, p. 62).

Having Faculty housed in two buildings posed problems for the unit. The report highlighted the fact that the separation of Faculty hindered communication, opportunities for interaction and access to the student records which were housed in the Clinical Sciences

Building. The voices of participants expressed some of the problems arising for this physical separation.

> Lesley: One problem in Faculty, housed in two buildings. You don't get a chance to get together and talk. 6/11/3

> Meryl: We don't get to know those people [in Garneau] in quite the same way as we do the people around us. The people there tend to be teaching in the same programs. So there will be a natural division anyway. The people dealing with the Post RN program are all over here. Many of the Basics are over there. Not all of them. I think it's a nuisance for them that their mail comes over here. But their offices are nice, much nicer than ours. I think that they like to think that there are advantages about not being under the administration's thumb. 6/25/3

> Daisy: It's a real handicap to have a divided Faculty. It's inefficient in terms of functioning. You have to run from one building to the other. It also, I think, can put the Faculty into two camps. If Faculty were sort of randomly distributed to either of the two buildings, there would be less of that but they are not. Certainly all the administrative Faculty such as your Dean are all here. And there is a sense I know from Garneau, Faculty talk about, oh well, you brains over in the Clinical Sciences Building, that kind of thing which is terrible and demeaning to the Faculty. 8/11/8

> Lesley: I think it does in terms of us functioning as a whole and having that sense of cohesiveness. I think there are two groups. . . . Some people feel that the Garneau people are perceived as lesser than the Clinical Sciences Building people. And I'm not sure that that's true. Some people like being at the Garneau because you have a little bit more freedom. The powers that be aren't around to look at you. And the offices are nice and pleasant and that type of thing. Oh, I think it does. I really do. There are people that I see only once a month at Faculty meetings or people I'd see after I'd been here for a year and I'd say, "Who are they?" 8/12(1)/7

> Frances: I think it is a tremendous disadvantage although if you've seen them you'll know that their offices are far nicer than our offices. The facilities are far nicer. But I think it's a tremendous disadvantage to have one group over there. First of all, they don't have access to the files like you would have if you were in this building. It's not that they can't get them but you'd have to make a trip over here. Winter especially. I think there tends to be groupings according to what building you're in although I certainly know that that's not entirely true because I think some people from this building see other people from the other building often after work. . . . And although the Dean said something about that group over there feeling inferior, many of them responded and said, "No. We don't feel inferior. We do see disadvantages of not being over in that building." But they didn't really want to be tagged as being the inferior group. So we did have some discussions about that. That's an assumption made which is not necessarily true but I don't think there is any doubt that we'd be much better off to have all the Faculty in one building. 8/12(2)/16

While the Faculty of Nursing was housed in two separate buildings, the report stated that there had been some improvement in the space available to the Faculty. What is evident is that despite the problems in communication, interpersonal relationships and access to student records, the staff in Garneau worked in "offices far nicer than" those in the Clinical Sciences Building. To some extent, it was felt that they evade the watchful eye of the administration.

It was considered desirable by some persons that a separate building be available for the Faculty. The report stated that "it is believed by many that a separate building should be a long-term goal to provide more adequate space and to gain better visibility on campus" (Faculty of Nursing, 1987, p. 63). This was not a unanimous position. In Meryl's view,

> [Separate facility] is not important for many of us. I don't see it as important. Our Dean thinks it's extremely important. She sees a building devoted to nursing. I think it's part of the thinking that unless we have something visible, highly visible like that we won't be highly recognized as an independent and significant academic force on campus. . . . I don't really see that as critical, having our own separate building. There's much to be said for trying to co-operate and integrate some of our teaching with some of the other health sciences. 6/25/4, 5

In the event that a separate building was not possible, it was hoped that all Faculty could be housed in the Clinical Sciences Building. According to Ethel, the goal for having "all the Faculty in one spot" was 1988 6/4/8. However, because of the delay in funding from the government, in 1986 that target was revised to 1990. It was envisaged, however, that achievement of that objective would not eliminate the problem of visibility of the Faculty on campus.

The lack of adequate space for teaching, research and offices proved problematic for the unit. Teaching had to be done in any available facilities on campus thus contributing to the diffusion of contact among Faculty members. Research space had to be negotiated with medicine serving to reinforce one negative aspect of the unit's self-image. The division of staff in two buildings and along program lines helped to create an internal

problem of image and maintain communication problems. During the self-study much attention was paid to the effects of the physical attributes of space. On the other hand, little attention was paid to the issues of internal image and communication.

F. Structure in Academia

The university environment is circumscribed by the tenets of commitment to teaching, conducting research and scholarly activities. These were reiterated by the University of Alberta in 1987 when it stated that

> for individual members of the academic staff, the University will continue to emphasize the importance of a high level of activity and quality in both teaching and research through its criteria for promotion and tenure. All members of the academic staff are expected to contribute from time to time to community service (within the University, professionally, locally, nationally or internationally). (University of Alberta, 1987, p. 4)

Life in academia calls for more than the above for members of the Faculty of Nursing, for nursing practice is a significant component of their world. Awareness of these aspects of the university environment influenced the focus and content of the self-study report. Members of the Faculty of Nursing entered the unit with some knowledge of what was expected of them. Since self-study was implemented by the institution, it was accepted as a task to be completed.

The interpretation of the place of Nursing Faculty in the university was exemplified by articulation of the relationship between individual, unit and institution. Ethel said,

> They have their own personal goals but they're in line with the Faculty goals. You see you set goals as a group. Sometimes people's personal goals get in the way of the interest of group effort. And that becomes problematic. But really I think the group has to take care of that. And if you have a proper structure that you have clear expectations like we have in our criteria, they know what they have to do to get a salary increment, to get promoted, to get tenure. It's very clear, it's spelled out in great detail. . . . There's a very good internal peer review system. It's not just the administrator. . . . If they feel this isn't what they want, then they're not going to stay anyway. . . . It's [research] one component. You see, I think the two, research and teaching, but you can't have one without the other. People, in my view, if they just want to teach, then they'd better work in the community college where research is not expected. But if you're in the university, that's part of the university and it's also part of our responsibility to advance knowledge to improve practice because that's what we're all about. 6/4/9

It is clear that Ethel felt that the personal goals of staff and those of the Faculty were synchronized. This was not examined during the self-study for, as seen in chapter 4, the self-study was conceptualized as requiring collective rather than individual self-evaluation. This was a missed opportunity, for as Casserly (1986), Dressel (1976) and Kells (1983) noted, the self-study is an apt mechanism for narrowing the gap between individual and institutional goals.

The presence of a system and structure which are clear to staff is evident. How these colour the nature of the unit is of interest. Lesley noted,

> I know my channels that I go through. I know the committee structure that I have to go through for whatever change I want to do. And I think the Dean probably has some democratic process but she does make independent decisions which is fine. I suppose it is hierarchical. Well I think the university if hierarchical. . . . Like I guess my perception is in terms of what I have to do as a Faculty member is part of the obligation I accepted when I came on Faculty and I don't see it as something that they, whoever they may be, are imposing on me. I think that it is just part of my responsibility as a Faculty member. And whether I choose to do it or not is also up to me. . . . I think we're very aware of those things like research and publication. That's part of the things that we must do. Some people think it's something that's imposed upon them and others think that it comes with the territory. But yes, very much so. It's very much a pressure. . . . Originally in Faculties of Nursing, the major commitment was to teaching and then as we took our place in the university setting, I think it still was teaching but then gradually, we figured that if we have to be and that if we behaved that we are part of the academic community, then we have to meet the requirements of academia which are scholarly endeavours in terms of research and publication. I think that what has happened in a lot of places is that we have gone too far the other way and perhaps the quality of teaching may suffer because it gets in the way. . . . It's difficult to maintain a balance and to have an outside life. 6/26/1, 2

However, though if only through experience, participants knew that a system and structure existed, not all were cognizant of the dynamics and interplay which occurred in the Faculty. For Zoe, the self-study helped her to see who some of the key players in the unit were and why things happened the way they did 7/22/2.

The tenets of higher education certainly have an effect on the lives of members of this unit. Particularly the need to prove oneself as a researcher can be problematic. The

expectations as interpreted within the Faculty were made clear in the report. Participants also addressed this reality.

> Zoe: I think the university environment, community, I think there's a lot of talk about tenure, about publication, and in our Faculty about getting our PhDs. There's a lot of sense that you have to perform, research. There's the sense of pressure that is there to do those things and to be a good teacher. We're continually evaluated in teaching. 7/22/5

> Daisy: It is very difficult. And knowing that the purpose behind the university is the conduct of research or certainly one of its strong pushes. That's not easy to do if you haven't done it. If you've done it, it's not so difficult to maintain. It's not so difficult to carve out the time to maintain it. It's not easy. But if you've never done it, you'd gotta go learn it before you can carve out the time. So it's easy to walk into it. It's easy for me to walk into research because I've done a lot. But there are other Faculty who have not done lots of research. And for them to do research, they've got to in fact begin at stage one and it's a lot more difficult and a lot more time consuming and there isn't the time to do that. I think Faculty who come with research to a university are in a much better position than Faculty who have to develop it. 8/11/8, 9

> Frances: I think we could spend a lot of time on the curriculum review which is going to deter whatever number of people that takes from doing their own research and publication. Which is always a very big dilemma for I think especially the professions. But maybe even more so nursing and I see that as a major problem. 8/12(2)/11

These institutional features which circumscribe the Faculty did affect the manner in which the self-study was organized. Lesley commented,

> We addressed research and scholarly endeavours and community endeavours. We also used the criteria under which the Faculty operate as our guide, teaching, research, scholarly activities, part of our mandate as a Faculty. 6/11/1

It also caused some concern for Frances who had invested much time in the self-study.

> I hope that that will be considered important enough in my own very personal sense when the promotions and salaries committee looks at me or at other people that have been strongly involved in this process. But I don't know, I am not going to be on that committee personally. . . . We've talked a little bit about it. But it does concern me that the major academic criteria still are publishing and research grants when in fact this is a profession which has strong responsibility to the professional communities especially as far as Baccalaureate and entry to practice by the year 2000. 8/12(2)/11, 12

The parameters set out within the academic environment for Faculty to operate by enabled summative assessment for purposes of salary increases, promotion and tenure and

facilitated freedom among staff. This freedom was seen as being accommodated by internal status factors.

> Meryl: One does have academic freedom. Very few questions are asked of you provided you are teaching and you are turning up to classes and you take part in committee work. There are some people who we rarely see. They teach and they do their research and so on but they don't do it here. They do it at home or elsewhere. And it's amazing. I suppose if they have tenure, they can get away with that. As long as you haven't got tenure, there's always that thought that you'd better do this or you'd better do that in order to impress people that you are in fact producing something or other. 6/25/4

The perspectives of participants on the nature of university life reveal that research looms large as an important feature. In fact, Ethel's view was that if someone was not interested in conducting research but was more concerned with teaching, that that person's place was in the community college. Harman (1989) found that there were generally four categories of academic staff, the research leaders who were concerned with research and the development of the institution, the individual scholars whose concern was primarily with their own research, the artisans who were committed to institutional development, engaged in university politics and downplayed research and the drones who were the lowest contributors with regard to institutional development and research. The image created by the views of the participants was that this unit was expected to comprise only research leaders.

The heavy focus on research within the participating unit was evident throughout the process and in the report. It surfaced as staffing, program development, scholarly activities, space and other issues were discussed. It is likely that this emphasis within the unit represents one of the unique features of the context in which the self-study was conducted.

G. Working Hard

Faculty members undertook the self-study as an add-on to their regular activities of teaching, research, clinical practice, committee work and other scholarly activities. For

persons involved in the preparation of the self-study report, this meant that some of their normal activities had to shelved. In some cases, aspects of their personal lives were foregone to enable contribution to the report. Others were glad not to have been involved in the writing process. One perception of themselves which was repeatedly mentioned was that the members of the Faculty of Nursing work particularly hard.

The belief that "everyone in the Faculty has a heavy load" (Lesley, 6/11/5) was voiced on several occasions. "Everyone feels so pressured to get their own work done and it's a real pressure because everyone is working hard. . . . We often talk about nurses being particularly work-orientated, hard on themselves, particularly getting things done," was Zoe's view 7/22/5. Daisy commented,

> I think in this Faculty we have the impression that we work harder than any other Faculty. I think we have far too much work to do. I think we work harder. I also think we have good products. And maybe we don't. I think we're hard done by. Not only do we work harder, I think we don't have the status that we ought to have. And our space problems and money problems are part of that. . . . I shouldn't say that word status as I know the President recognizes the Faculty of Nursing, and indeed it is a Faculty. But we do have a bit of a problem. At least we think we have a problem, certainly around power, hierarchy, which may have to do with female orientation, I don't know, with nursing. 8/11/7

The feeling of working harder than others in the university comes, in part, from the practice element of nursing. Lesley said,

> We all do carry a heavy load, just with the other types of work, our teaching. Those of us in clinical courses we have anywhere between 16 and 20 committed hours a week and sometimes more, 16 to 22 sometimes, and plus your committee work and plus your research and plus your community work and plus your our own practice. You don't have time to do this. I can see that it might take two or three years to do something that might take a shorter period of time if you had the concentrated period. 8/12(1)/5

This feeling of working harder seems related to self-image which, as noticed earlier, placed nursing lower on the scale of status and power than other disciplines including medicine, the discipline with which it is most commonly contrasted. In order to counteract the image perceived to be held by others, the unit set standards for itself which often resulted in pressures. About these self-imposed pressures, participants had this to say.

> Frances: Nursing has a terrible tendency to always want to do everything perfectly. And because I think we've always felt inferior in terms of any situation, medicine has always been superior, and in the university community we feel inferior because we haven't produced as much research and publishing and so whenever we take on something, we do it with great gusto. . . . So I think nursing is putting extra pressure on themselves. Now the other side of the issue is that if you don't put that pressure on people probably won't get their PhDs and they may not do as much research until it becomes so much a part of us that we don't think much about it. 8/12(2)/17

> Lesley: Nursing as a discipline and as a profession influences some of the things we try to emphasize. People don't see nursing and nurses as a discipline. People within nursing don't think of it as a discipline. We try to show, yes, we are researchers and scientists on that one light but then we have that other part, the practitioner part, that caring part that makes up nursing. . . . We're always trying to be as good as or better than or have higher expectations of other Faculties. Don't think we want to be like men. . . . We do struggle, we do have higher expectations for ourselves. . . . It [femaleness] makes a difference. 6/11/6, 7

The image held of nursing as a profession and as an academic discipline by those in the field influences the manner in which staff approach their duties.

H. Significance of These Issues

Of the six issues addressed in this chapter, only one, that of space was discussed in the report. The other five were not discussed in any depth during the self-study process either. Yet these are issues which appear to be of significance to participants. These issues characterize "self" in some way. They represent elements of the unit which can be subjectively construed. They are essential elements of the collective self-image, one which is privately held. Reflecting on the definition of self portrayed in chapter 3, it seems then that the self-study was considered to be a reflection of a collective, public self for the collective, private self was excluded from the experience. Additionally, neither the individual private nor the individual public (professional) self was accommodated in the process.

The nature of self-study as viewed by the participants and the process and product of their experience were more objectively defined. Looking at and reporting on one's history, staffing, long-range plans and the like can help to preserve an image of wholeness

and unity of focus and purpose. Yet, the reality is that within any unit there exists a diversity of persons, viewpoints and stances. If the collective private self is not accommodated during a process such as this self-study, when will it have an opportunity to be taken into account? One wonders when the fact that members feel that they pay much attention to detail and that maybe they have gone too far, that being women they have something different to offer the institution, that they are inferior within the institution and particularly in relation to medicine, that they are hard done by within the academic setting will be taken into account.

Sleightholm (1985) found that conflict in the multiple roles played by nursing Faculty led to feelings of guilt, frustration and inadequacy. She noted that

> the nurse educator's perception of her role is of vital importance. The nurse educator who fails to reach an understanding of her roles will be unable to explain it or deal with those in her role-set who may have contradictory views of that role. This confusion can only contribute to the conflicts that are already part of a professional role. (p. 30)

It seems, then, that not only would the collective self need to be of concern but also the individual self since beliefs and attitudes held by the individual of herself would no doubt have implications for functioning within the unit and for the nature of self-study conducted.

Do these two aspects of self, the private and the public, militate against in-depth self-study being implemented? Is there a place for individual self-evaluation during the process of unit self-study? The possibilities raised by these questions will be discussed in chapter 7.

CHAPTER 7

Learning from the Research

A. Introduction

The experience of the Faculty of Nursing in conducting unit self-study has been instructive. An examination of the stages of the process, the motivating factors and the results, both tangible as evidenced by the self-study report and the intangible as gleaned from the expressed perspectives of the nine primary participants, has yielded an understanding of dynamics and possibilities of self-study. This exploration has resulted in a portrait of the multifaceted process as well as overt and covert influences on it. It has led to the identification of three main considerations of self-study which are significant in the conduct of an incisive and potentially useful evaluative exercise. The nature of these three considerations, the manner in which they impinged on the self-study and implications of these considerations are discussed in this chapter. Also presented in this chapter are suggested preconditions for and countervailing factors in the conduct of in-depth, effective self-study and implications for the conceptualization and conduct of evaluation which can inform future research and practice.

B. Considerations in the Conduct of Unit Self-study

Unit self-study conducted as one phase of institution-wide program review has, simultaneously, characteristics of an internally- and an externally-motivated endeavour. It is influenced by factors which are related to the fact that the unit is a part of a wider institution in which specific values, tenets and principles direct behaviour and expectations of the institution's members. These factors are here referred to as external considerations. Additionally, the unit self-study is influenced by factors which are related to organizational features of the unit and are reflected in beliefs and normal practices. These factors are referred to as internal considerations. Thirdly, there are factors, called self considerations, which are integrally related to the collective self-image of the unit and which may or may

not have been taken into account during self-study. The nature of the three groups of factors and the manner in which they influenced the self-study in the participating unit are presented below.

External Considerations

Program review in the University of Alberta was propelled by a decision of the Board of Governors. As a result, a model necessitating the unit to complete a self-study was devised. The model also called for the unit to be reviewed by an external committee -- the Unit Review Committee, for the unit to respond to the report of the URC and for strategies for change to be delineated and agreed upon. The approach to program review was premised on the belief that the members of the unit were in the best position to tell their own story in the form of a report.

The model was one based on democratic principles. However, it introduced elements into its interpretation which were counter to its intent of being an internal process. One such element was the use of an external review committee. Conrad and Wilson (1985) noted that the use of such a body brought objectivity and credibility to the exercise. At the same time, however, definition of this audience of the self-study report which, in fact, essentially had access to members of the unit and other unit constituents as informants rendered the self-study, in part, an external exercise for the unit. Some participants such as Ethel and Lesley said that they considered the self-study to be an internal one. Others such as Frances and Meryl pointed out that they were aware that an external audience existed. The effect of this context was to prepare the report for an external audience as evidenced by Frances' comment that "I think that there are other things that when you are presenting yourself externally that definitely are not appropriate" 8/12(2)/4.

Another consideration was the guidelines for the self-study prepared by the co-ordinating committee. These guidelines indicated that the unit was free to design the self-study in whatever manner it saw fit. However, they also contained the suggestion that a

small steering committee be used to prepare the report. The participating unit used an existing committee, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Council, to prepare the draft of the self-study report.

A third consideration was the request from PACCR to prepare a report that would be comprehensive but concise. The participating unit was aware of this request. Daisy noted that the report had, of necessity, to be succinct and this limited the coverage of content.

A fourth consideration was related to the timing of the self-study. PACCR approached the unit head to determine when the review process could begin. This was an important decision. For, not only was it necessary for the Faculty to identify a time which was convenient to Faculty members, but the unit's program review process had to be accommodated in the schedule of PACCR. As was noted in chapter 4, although it was originally intended that the Faculty would be initiated to the program review process at its September Faculty meeting, it was not until the October Faculty Council meeting that the Chairman of PACCR could perform this function.

Additionally, PACCR asked the unit to prepare the document "on time." Wilson (1987) advised that "it is more important to complete a good evaluation on time than an excellent one late" (p. 6) thus supporting PACCR's request. In this case, once the decision was taken to embark on the self-study and the initiation was completed, the unit pressed on to ensure that the report was completed by the end of the academic year.

Within the university resides a system for recognizing the contributions and efforts of Faculty members. That system is one which necessitates the evaluation of Faculty for consideration for salary increments, promotion and tenure. One of the requirements of recognition is the conduct of research and the publication of scholarly writing. This institutional reality proved to be a significant factor in the conduct of the self-study in the participating unit. It influenced the self-study both in terms of what is here referred to as an

internal consideration and as a self consideration since this externally-instituted requirement is internally defined and applied.

These external contextual considerations were significant for the participating unit. They influenced the focus, organization, coverage, timing and value of the exercise. In some instances, they accommodated and complemented systems which existed within the unit.

Internal Considerations

The initiation, organization and execution of the self-study reflected systems inherent in the unit. The timing of the self-study was influenced by the fact that the unit had just prior to initiation of the process hosted an international conference. The decision was taken to complete all matters related to the conference before embarking on the self-study. It also happened that the self-study was conducted during the final year of the Dean's tenure in the unit.

The conduct of the self-study was costly in terms of time and effort invested by Faculty members. The time devoted to the self-study was portrayed as being time taken from other pursuits which would otherwise have gained attention. Therefore, decisions had to be made regarding what would be set aside or foregone so that time would be available to undertake the self-study. In this case, both academic and personal sacrifices had to be made. Theresa pointed out that upon completion of her written contribution to the report, she was able to get back to a project which she had shelved while Daisy said that the reason why she was not on vacation was because of her involvement in the self-study.

It was made very clear by participants that evaluation was considered an integral part of the unit's activities and therefore not foreign to them. Yet, Daisy pointed out that when the Faculty attempted to come up with an approach to conducting the self-study as a group, little progress was made. Members of the Faculty made the assumption that past experience with evaluation had prepared them for conducting self-study. Seeley (1981),

recognizing the difference between program review and other forms of evaluation, noted that program review results in a change in status quo and can be a threatening experience.

The next recourse was to appeal to the Executive Committee to devise a strategy. In the Executive Committee, one person prepared a "straw man" which was then fleshed out, giving direction to the self-study. Daisy claimed that this approach was used all the time in the Faculty.

The understanding of the purpose of the self-study was disparate. No attempt was made to clarify the purpose within the Faculty. Therefore, the self-study proceeded and was developed based on the understandings, experience and knowledge of key persons within the hierarchy of the unit. This resulted in the report being seen as reflecting the interests of the Dean with the consequence that some participants felt distanced from the self-study. In other words, the multiple realities which existed in the unit were not readily accommodated during the process. Combined with the fact that an external audience influenced the content of the report, the assumption of ownership of the report and identification with the process was the preserve of few.

The self-study report was prepared in stages with members of the Executive Committee preparing a first draft using available data, that submitted by others within the Faculty and that sought from other sources. The second stage involved a wider cross-section of full-time staff at a retreat. The feedback received at the retreat was incorporated as deemed fit in a third stage of preparation with the final report being worked on by a committee of three. This process led to different levels of involvement, different levels of understanding of the process and therefore different degrees of ownership and affiliation with the process or product. The multiple perspectives which people held within the unit were not readily accommodated.

Much emphasis in the report was placed on the research and publication achievements of the Faculty members and students. Also, the extent to which the efforts of

the contributors to the self-study report would be considered at the time of peer review for salary increments, promotion and tenure was voiced by Frances who had herself invested much time and effort to the self-study process. This reflected the interpretation by the Faculty of the requirement within the university to have Faculty members evaluated to inform salary, promotion and tenure decisions.

The acknowledgement of two categories of audiences, one being external and the other being internal, led to a report which presented a collective public face to the readers. The realization of the benefits for the internal audience came as the process evolved. Participants such as Lesley, Meryl, Nancy and Zoe expressed ways in which the process benefited them. Meryl noted, however, that the process did not go far enough in benefiting the unit. She pointed out that had the process been designed differently allowing more time for exploration and action, more involvement would have been achieved resulting in greater cohesiveness within the unit. This would have facilitated Faculty members in addressing some of the collective private dimensions of the unit.

These internal considerations coloured the self-study report and Faculty members' experiences of process. They were influenced by the internal and external contexts of the unit.

Self Considerations

The participants defined the object of evaluation as the Faculty. In other words, the self which was being evaluated was the collective self. This meant that the unit self-study in this case did not serve as a mechanism for bringing the goals of the individuals within the unit and those of the organization closer together as suggested by Casserly (1986) and Kells (1983). Fife (1983) stated that "the essence of a higher education institution is the Faculty. The sum of their training, values, behaviour and morale, and their dedication to their profession and the institution dictates the quality and effectiveness of an institution." Brookes and German (1983) noted that "it is the Faculty who shape the image and the

future of their institutions. They are also central to the mission of the institution. It is, therefore, essential that their concerns be heard and addressed" (p. 2). The importance of the role of individual Faculty cannot be denied. Yet, here, the individual's self and concerns were not considered integral to the unit self-study.

Two faces of the collective self were revealed during this research, the public face and the private face. The public face was evidenced by the self-study report while the private face was shown in terms of elements of self-image discussed in chapter 6.

The report catalogued elements such as the history of the unit, its programs, research, scholarly activities and funding and future directions for the Faculty. While some participants agreed that it was necessary to project a certain image to the external audiences, noting that some issues were internal and could not be addressed by PACCR, Zoe said, "The feeling is that you have to tell that everything's all right. You have to give the impression that everything is going well and that there's some cohesiveness" 7/22/6. This was the portrayal of the collective public self.

What then of the collective private self? Asked whether the issues which were considered internal would be dealt with at some point, Frances indicated that those which were within her purview certainly would be. Zoe on the other hand felt that "maybe I'm naive, maybe I'm idealistic" 7/22/2 in expecting those issues which were of interest to her to be addressed within the unit.

The opportunity for individuals to meet with the Unit Review Committee did provide an avenue for some individual concerns to be made public. It is possible that some of the issues which were internally considered part of the collective private domain were raised in this forum. That seems a contradiction, however. But it does give an idea of systems within the unit. For the collective public self which was projected through the self-study report did not, in fact, reflect the perspectives of the entire Faculty. As noted in chapter 5, the varying levels of involvement led to different degrees of understanding,

satisfaction and perceived benefits. What is evident, is that although the process within the unit silenced some Faculty members, some did see the URC as a possibility for giving voice to their interests, thoughts and concerns. Holding such a position and moreover being put in a situation where this possibility becomes viable, reduces the potency of the self-study process as a vehicle for addressing and resolving issues which emerge because of the multiple realities existing within the unit.

The collective self-image, a part of the collective private self, was disclosed by the participants. Its features included a belief that nursing is slow to change, pays a great deal of attention to detail, is imbued in evaluation, is inferior in the academic environment, denies the qualities and importance of nurses being women and is "hard done by." This self-image was not discussed during the formal self-study but did emerge during the conversations conducted during this research. It did influence the self-study by directing some of the content of the report, for example, the emphasis placed on reporting the research activities of staff and students and research grants, and the manner in which the self-study was conducted.

The collective public self was revealed through the report. The collective private self was not. It was addressed to a limited extent during the self-study and the potential existed for a part of that self to be shared with the Unit Review Committee. The elements of the collective private self which were discussed in chapter 6 and which seem to have much currency for the development of a healthy identity and self-image were not addressed during the self-study.

C. Implications of External, Internal and Self Considerations

Arising from these considerations are a number of implications for the conduct of self-study. These are presented below.

Implications Related to External Considerations

The program review model. The program review model employed by the University of Alberta was one which was intended to give control of the process to the unit. It assumed that members of units would be able to accept and operate within the boundaries of the freedom accorded. It is possible that this posed a problem for the unit.

The model also incorporated the involvement of an external review committee. This reinforced the external component of the self-study and the existence of multiple agendas.

Guidelines. The guidelines encouraged the unit to tell its own story in whatever manner it deemed fit. At the same time, however, subtle directions were given to implementation of the process. The guidelines, although intended to support the freedom introduced through the model, actually placed restrictions on the process as interpreted by the participating unit.

Timing of the self-study. The self-study was of necessity scheduled at a time which was relatively convenient for the members of the unit. At the same time, it had to be accommodated in the schedule of PACCR. In this case, the mutually convenient time happened to occur during the final year of the Dean's tenure. This did not allow her to follow through with the recommendations put forward nor to guide the changes which may have occurred during or as a result of the process.

Nature of the institution. One reality within the institution was the system by which Faculty members were evaluated for salary increments, promotion and tenure. Among the criteria was the degree to which Faculty members engaged in research. This aspect of university life proved to be of great significance to the members of the unit and the nature of the story they chose to tell.

The program review model in place and the guidelines used appeared to be premised on the notion that the members of the institution were in the best position to examine the unit. This suggests that the designers and promoters of the program review

process believe that the unit is created and directed by the people within it, a point expressed by Greenfield (1985). This perspective of the units within the institution was found to be different from that held in the participating unit. This incongruence has significance for the interpretation of the task and the implementation of the program review process.

Implications Related to Internal Considerations

Nature of the unit. The organization within the unit gave direction to the conduct of the self-study. The Dean was evidently the primary force. Apart from the importance given to the role of the Executive Committee, key, senior people were considered to be influential in the design of the process and product. The apparently bureaucratic nature of the unit ensured that there were different levels of involvement in the process with the result that ownership of and commitment to the results varied. It also proved to be incongruent with the assumptions of the designers and promoters of the overall process and may hinder the degree of impact of the self-study.

Assumptions made within the unit. Members of the unit made assumptions about the process and the relevance of past experience with evaluation of members of the unit which influenced the process. For example, it was assumed that evaluation was an integral part of the work and lives of members of the Faculty and therefore prepared them for the self-study experience. It was also assumed that since some Faculty members had had experience with accreditation or had served on the URC of other Faculties, they were equipped to inform the self-study in their unit. No major attempt was made to clarify these assumptions nor to ensure that the wider Faculty understood the purpose of the self-study or what was expected of them. As a result, some participants only understood the possibilities, scope and costs of the process as they experienced it.

Interpretation of the nature of the institution. Members of the participating unit held the conduct of research in high esteem. This was at times seen as being in conflict with other aspects of life in a professional, academic unit -- teaching and clinical practice. This belief coloured the self-image of the unit and influenced the degree of attention paid during the self-study to this aspect of the place of unit members in the institution. It is likely that this focus diverted attention from other aspects of life in the unit which could have contributed to program improvement.

Interpretation of the program review model. The fact that the program review model allowed the members of the unit to design the self-study as they wished gave them the opportunity to proceed in a manner which was reflective of the distinctiveness of their unit. The extent to which this opportunity would be seized is, no doubt, related to the maturity of the unit and the sense of self it possesses.

The use of a Unit Review Committee lead to the identification of both external and internal audiences. This resulted in the portrayal of a collective, public image through the self-study report. Efforts at clarifying the audiences of the self-study could have assisted in a better understanding of the possibilities of the process and the role of the URC.

Interpretation and enactment of the guidelines. The relatively open guidelines allowed varied interpretation. Units had the opportunity to address only the categories such as history and future directions delineated by PACCR or to go beyond those. The participating unit focused primarily on preparation of the self-study report using the categories suggested by PACCR, chose to use systems which were in place and with which its members were familiar; it also proceeded along lines which were reflective of the organizational hierarchy. As mentioned above, there seemed to be incongruence between the premise on which the guidelines were built and the nature of the unit thus leading to the intention of PACCR of having the majority of unit members involved in the self-study not being realized.

Timing. The self-study conducted towards the end of the tenure of the Dean was considered by some participants to result in a self-study report which represented the achievements of the Dean rather than the status of the unit. This was concluded while acknowledging that it was possible that the Dean had the best overview of the Faculty. The fact that, in this case, the work of unit had to continue under a new Deanship suggests that some means of ensuring a more representative view held by persons who would remain in the unit was warranted. This would have assisted during the transitional period.

Implications Related to Self Considerations

Definition of self. The definition of self as the unit limited the self-study to an examination of a collective entity. It allowed individuals to maintain distance from the process and alleviated the possibility of blame being placed on anyone. This helped to reduce the threat which Dressel (1976), Seeley (1981) and Torbert (1981) identified as potential outcomes of self-study.

This definition subscribed to the conceptualization of the individual and the unit as separate entities, a position which delimited the scope of self-study. It did not provide for an examination of the relationship between the goals of individuals and those of the unit. Therefore the chance to brings these goals more in line with each other as suggested by Casserly (1986) and Kells (1983) was lost.

Collective public self. The belief that some things were appropriate for public view while others were not was made evident. This led to some discontent within the unit since the collective public self presented was not agreed upon. This, it would seem, would have significance for the commitment to the results of the process by the disaffected members of the unit.

As an orientation to the unit, the report which revealed the collective public self could only present one perspective of the life of the unit, a perspective which it is possible did not coincide with the perspective of any member of the unit.

Collective private self. The self-study was part of a process which was designed to lead to program improvement. In this instance, the object of evaluation was defined as the collective self. Yet, a vital part of that collective self, the collective private self was not addressed during the process. With the self-perception of being inferior in the academic setting, needing to be prolific in research and always working hard, the unit ran the risk of not addressing the issues comprising the collective private self, issues which may well have needed to be discussed and, if possible, resolved if the desire to have a more cohesive and productive unit was to be achieved.

Paying attention to the collective private self would evidently have assisted the unit in developing a more focused sense of self. With this in train, members of the unit would then have been better able to identify with the unit and to work towards redressing the aspects of their image of the collective self which proved to be counterproductive.

Individual self. The individual self was not considered to be part of the self-study focus. Yet, if we subscribe to the notion that an organization is shaped by the people in it, we would certainly find a place for the individual self in unit self-study. For, the interests, understandings and contributions of the individual, both in the private and public realms, help give the direction to the unit. To fail to include an opportunity for individual self-reflection is to render the self-study incomplete.

D. Promoting In-depth Effective Self-study

The achievement of in-depth and effective self-study is, evidently, the aim of any institution which designs and implements such a process. Yet there are many opportunities for counteractive strategies to be adopted. It is apparent from a review of the literature that recognition has been given to the importance of the statement and clarification of the purpose of the evaluative exercise (Conrad & Wilson, 1985; Cranton & Legge, 1978), its design and implementation strategies (Bigsby & Davis, 1989; Zammuto, 1986). What has not been made explicit in the case of self-study are the dimensions of the self-study and,

more particularly, the nature of the object of the evaluation, in other words, the definition of self.

Reflecting on the external, internal and self considerations discussed above, it is clear that attention needs to be paid to these facets of the process if the investment of time, money and effort is to reap its just rewards. The experience has been that more recognition has been given to the external and internal considerations of self-study than the self considerations. Therefore I shall attempt to offer suggestions for the conduct of in-depth self-study paying attention to the importance of self considerations. These are made in light of the questions raised in chapter 1 and are based on the experiences of the participants and those resulting from the conduct of this research. The overriding question was whether the expectations held of institutional self-study, program review and unit self-study are realistic, in other words, can effective self-evaluation be undertaken within organizations and, if so, what conditions would facilitate this; if not, why not.

Why should self-study be conducted? Self-study is an evaluative process which has the potential to enable the members of a unit to give direction to their endeavours based on needs, interests and goals of individuals as well as the group. Through critical self-reflection, the unit's members should be able to identify their individual and collective strengths and weaknesses and devise strategies for maintaining the former and alleviating the latter.

When should self-study be conducted? Self-study would be most effective if it were conducted as a continuous rather than an occasional, incidental process. Continuous self-study would be internally motivated. As Johnson and Christal (1985) stated, self-study viewed as being externally motivated tends to be sporadic and ineffective.

Incidental, internally-motivated unit self-study can also yield benefits. In this circumstance, the timing of the self-study is of importance. The self-study should occur at

a point in time which allows for implementation of strategies for change leading to improvement without an impending change in leadership.

How should self-study be conducted? Self-study espoused as an internal process has the great potential for resulting in program improvement. More importantly, if it were undertaken as collaborative enquiry, benefits at both the collective as well as the individual levels could be realized.

A number of issues which influence the manner in which self-study should be conducted are presented below.

-- The purpose of the self-study should be clear. It should be discussed widely within the unit with the intent of reaching consensus.

-- The scope of the self-study should be delineated. For example, a decision should be taken on whether the self-study would simultaneously focus multiple issues or on one issue.

-- The design of the self-study, which would be guided by the purpose and scope, should facilitate involvement of the majority, if not all, members of the unit from the inception of the process. It should be planned over a long enough period of time to allow for involvement of the majority of unit members. At the same, one should guard against prolonging the process until its utility is diminished.

Countervailing Factors -- Essential Tensions. A number of countervailing factors need to be taken into account. Ideally, self-study should be conducted as an internal process and on a continuing basis. However, the reality is that self-study is more likely to be put in place as part of a wider institutional process.

In this light, it is imperative that the multiple audiences of the self-study be addressed with every attempt being made to stem the development of the perception of evaluation as threat considered. It is also imperative to distinguish between self-study as a process and self-study as a product. During a process, a clearer understanding of the

dynamics of the unit can be gleaned and strategies for change and maintenance can be defined and implemented; here, the concerns of the collective private self and the individual self can be accommodated. Self-study seen as a product would focus more on the production of a report and the portrayal of a collective public self.

Another important factor is the nature of the organization. Self-study conducted as collaborative enquiry would necessitate self-disclosure, support for the views of others and confrontation of issues (Torbert, 1981b). Therefore, the climate within the unit must be one where there is trust and respect, elements fostered during the process of clarifying the nature of the collective private self.

The costs of self-study cannot be ignored. The implementation of a truly in-depth, potentially effective self-study would require investment of time and effort by members of the unit. At the same time, these members would be expected to carry out the functions associated with their substantive positions, those being teaching, research and, in the case of professional units, clinical practice (or a related activity). In order to counter the negative impact of the cost of self-study, some method could be developed to take the contributions of Faculty into account when peer review is conducted.

E. Implications for Evaluation Theory and Practice

Evaluation is most often conducted by external evaluators. It is pertinent to know that external program evaluators are more likely to be exposed to the collective public face of a unit than the collective private face. Additionally and more crucially, the self factors operating within a unit or other focus of evaluation would more often than not elude the attention of an external evaluator or be interpreted differently. For as Elliot (1984) noted, the difference between "outsider" and "insider" understanding is not one of degree but one that is quality. So while credibility and objectivity may be achieved by the use of external evaluators, some essential understandings of the object of the evaluation are likely to be missed.

Internal evaluators run the risk of focusing on the collective public face to the detriment of the entity. The desire to protect the image of the entity through projection of one that is suitable for an external audience is understandable. However, it is imperative that attention be paid to the collective private aspects of the unit if commitment to the results of the evaluation is to be achieved. It is therefore suggested that external evaluators address the manner in which they approach the evaluation enterprise, moving towards greater involvement of the unit or program participants in the design and implementation of the evaluation.

F. Concluding Comments

The self-study process conducted as part of the program review process in an institution of higher education is potentially a valuable experience for members of the unit. The extent of the benefits to be derived depends on the design and implementation strategy employed. Whether viewed as a process designed to provide information to an external audience or primarily conducted for self as defined as the unit, there is utility in the self-study. There are, however, consequences. These consequences include the investment of time and effort and shifting of priorities from activities which can contribute to the individuals' academic profile and from aspects of their personal lives.

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APPENDIX 1

Consent Form

Name of Study: The Meaning and Conduct of Evaluation: The Case of Unit Self-study

Name of Supervisor: Dr. T. Maguire
Phone Number: 432-3751

I, _____, consent to be interviewed by Janice M. Jackson, doctoral student in the Faculty of Graduate Studies and associated with the Department of Educational Psychology as a part of the above mentioned study. I agree to the interviews being audiotaped and understand that the audiotapes, which will be erased on completion of the study, will be secured in a locked drawer during the study.

I also understand that my identity will not be disclosed at any time, that I maintain the right to withdraw or refuse to answer any questions without penalty, and that I have the right to request that any contributions I have made during our discourse be withheld. I further understand that I have the right to ask of the investigator any questions which pertain to the study.

....
Investigator Date

....
Participant Date

APPENDIX 2

Extracts from Faculty of Nursing Meetings

Faculty Meeting, September 8, 86

Dr Harris, Chairman of the President's Advisory Committee on Campus Reviews (PACCR), will be coming to the October Faculty of Nursing Council Meeting to review the process for carrying out the PACCR Review. Dean MacPhail noted that the length of time can vary for that total process, but that it is usually a fairly lengthy effort.

Executive Committee Meeting, September 15, 86

Dr Harris, Chairman of PACCR, is coming to the October Council Meeting because he was unable to be present on the date of the September Faculty meeting. Dean MacPhail noted that she will be asking the Executive to develop a plan for organizing the Faculty for the review. This will be considered for the next meeting with the possibility of organizing [into] groups.

Faculty of Nursing Council Meeting, October 20, 1986

President's Advisory Committee on Campus Reviews: Orientation to the Review Process

Dr W. E. Harris, Chairman of the committee which manages the PACCR reviews was introduced. Dr Harris noted that there is no standard format for the review, however, he distributed a diagram (attached) which explains the process. He pointed out that there are two main steps: 1) the Self-Study; and 2) the Review Process. The Self-Study report is the primary document which the Unit Review Committee, when constituted, will use. This document is prepared by the Faculty. Dr Harris suggested that a committee be appointed to ensure that the document is produced on time. He stressed that the report should be concise and at the same time complete. He noted that an appendix or a separate document should contain the curriculum vitae of staff including other documents relative to research, teaching, etc.

Dr Harris noted that the Unit Review Committee is constituted by two external members from the same discipline, one internal member from a related department, one internal member from the University-at-Large and one member from the local profession. In seeking reviewers the Committee is looking for an individual who has demonstrated both scholarship and good judgment. Nominations for review team members should come from Faculty for four of the five review team members. The nominations should be forwarded a month or so before the completion of the Self-Study. Dr Harris made it clear that the possible Unit Review Committee members should not be contacted by Faculty members, because the President must clear all appointments. Therefore, Dr Harris himself contacts any members who are to be approached.

The Self-Study Report is sent to review team members in advance and arrangements are made for direct interchange with the Dean, Faculty members, students, the President, Vice-Presidents and related Deans. A tour of the department is normally included. The review team is asked to examine the situation and no clear boundaries are given within which the review team is to confine the review. The normal documentation which is given to the President includes the

Unit Self-Study Report, the Unit Review Committee Report, the Unit response to the Unit Review Committee Report and PACCR advice re the distribution of sections of the report. Although there is no deadline for the completion of the Self-Study Report, it would be expected that this would be ready before spring arrives.

Faculty Meeting, November 3, 86

Dean MacPhail asked for suggestions for involving faculty in planning and the self-study, indicating that the Executive Committee will be looking at it. Some suggested areas for study and inclusion mentioned were the curriculum threads, the evolution of the graduate program and the development of research. Other questions were raised in relation to the off-campus program and the [involvement] of students in the review. Dean MacPhail indicated that the Executive Committee will initiate a mechanism to move forward on this matter.

Executive Committee Meeting, January 19, 87

A suggested Outline and Approaches to Preparation of PACCR Self-Study Report was presented.

The following categories . . . were designated, with a member of the Executive Committee to serve as leader of each group who will recruit others.

a) The Study and Practice of Nursing - An overview of the development of the Faculty of Nursing, focusing particularly on the past ten years with goals for the future identified (e.g., baccalaureate for entry to practice by the year 2000).

b) Organization of the Faculty of Nursing

Organizational Framework by Program
Communication Networks
Committee Structure
Plans for Change in Organization

To include staffing, both faculty and support staff. CVs included in Appendix. The Nursing Undergraduate Student Association, CUNSA and student participation on other university committees should be included also. . . . All sections should include an historical perspective, a current perspective and future plans.

c) Undergraduate Programs
Basic and Post-RN
Off-Campus
- Structure
- Curriculum Overview
- Clinical Placement
- Support Courses
- Operational and Program Implications

Both current and projected enrollments should be included here.

d) The Graduate Program

Development and Progress of MN
Program Description and Requirements
Scholarly Activities of Graduates
PhD and Future

Student research should be included in this section.

e) Scholarly Activities and Faculty Research

To include visiting scholars.

f) Research Support and Development

Description of Research Activities - Evolution
Research Support
Problems with Research
Process of ethical approval and agency information to be included as well as joint research appointments.

g) Academic Relationships

Administrative Units
Student Advisement
Year and Course Leaders
Relationships with other Faculties/Departments
Relationships with Community Colleges/Hospital Schools
Concerns
Joint Appointments

h) Professional Relationships and Community Services

To include Faculty contributions to outside agencies - major these, roles, e.g., CNA, AARN, community. Continuing education to be included.

i) Resources

Academic - Nonacademic Staff (including joint appointments)
Finances
Space
Library and Related Learning Materials
Clinical Laboratory
Comments and Concerns

j) Current Concerns and Future Directions

Program
Research and Scholarly Activity
Professional RElationships
Staff REsources
Finances

Space and Learning Materials

Future Directions
Immediate
Long-term

General Guidelines

Each Faculty should include current in their section plus long-range planning. Rough drafts of each section should be ready for the Executive Meeting on March 23 and then revised for the Faculty of Nursing Retreat in April. Strengths should be emphasized, but weaknesses should also be included. Charts should be used where possible. Include historical perspective and progress to the current situation and then to what is desired and/or projected.

Faculty Meeting, February 2, 1987

Preparation of PACCR Report: Assignment of Work Groups - Executive Committee (attached to Agenda)
The rough drafts are to be submitted to the Executive Committee by March 23. They will be prepared by the Executive Committee for presentation at the Faculty Retreat in April. Categories (e) Scholarly Activities and Faculty Research; and (f) Research Support and Development will be combined, with J. Lander assuming responsibility for the combined category.

Faculty have been requested to update their curriculum vitae for the second publication of the Scholarly Activities and Faculty Research. The updated curriculum vitae are to be sent to J. Lander for the PACCR Report. J. Kikuchi will be responsible for the category regarding the graduate program. If faculty have particular interest in any of the categories for the PACCR Report, they are encouraged to contact the faculty member responsible for the category.

Executive Committee Meeting, March 9, 87

Next meeting: March 23. Faculty members are to report on their progress with the PACCR self-study assignments. A final product is not expected, only progress reports.

Executive Committee Meeting, March 23, 87

Progress Reports re PACCR Self-Study Report
The following reports have been received to date:

a) The Study and Practice of Nursing
b) Organization of Faculty of Nursing
c) Undergraduate Program
d) Academic Relationships
e) Resources

Three copies of the draft versions of the reports are available in the offices of . . . . It was decided that a small group, made of . . . . would meet to work on the reports. The remainder of the Executive Committee members would be free to review the report and submit their suggestions to the group.

It was suggested that the use of jargon should be corrected because some members of the PACCR Review Committee who will review the PACCR report are not nurses. The use of nursing jargon could create a great deal of difficulty in comprehending the report.

Executive Committee Meeting, May 1, 87
PACCR Report: Input from Retreat

There was some discussion about the comments received about the PACCR report. Faculty responded positively to the overall report, although some changes and additions were suggested. For example, mentioning Faculty members who chair major external committees and including more information about the 1986 International Nursing Research Conference.

. . . .

Two new sections will be added:

Teaching - teaching innovations, faculty/student advisement
Students - recruitment of, advisement, composition of student body, committee participation, providing teaching award.

The Students section will precede the Undergraduate and Graduate Program sections.

Faculty of Nursing Council Meeting, May 19, 1987 - Dean's Report
Self-Study and Long-Range Planning

The Executive Committee of the Faculty of Nursing Council devoted its major attention during the past year to organizing and undertaking a self-study as the first step in the internal review process required by the President's Advisory Committee on Campus Reviews (PACCR), and to long-range planning which is a logical component of self-study. Each member of the Committee accepted responsibility for one or more parts of the self-study and involved Faculty colleagues and students as feasible in preparing the first draft. A draft of the total report formed the basis for the annual Faculty Retreat held April 23 and 24, 1987, which served as an excellent means of obtaining faculty input into the self-study report and long-range planning through the use of small group sessions.

The report will be completed by the end of June and plans will be made by the President's Advisory Committee on Campus Reviews for the continuation of the review process in 1987-88 with the appointment of a Review Committee, which will include two external nurse members for whom we have submitted nominations. These and the two internal members from other parts of the University are selected by the President. The self-study will provide an excellent source of documented information to assist my successor, Dr. Marilynn Wood, in her orientation to the Faculty of Nursing and the University of Alberta.

APPENDIX 3

List of Documents

Faculty of Nursing

1. Preparation of PACCR Report: Assignment of Work Groups
2. Dean's Report to the Faculty of Nursing Council, May 19, 1987
3. Report to the President's Advisory Committee on Campus Reviews
4. Excerpts from minutes
5. List of Academic Staff 1986-1987
6. Publication entitled Scholarly Activities and Faculty Research

President's Advisory Committee on Campus Reviews

1. Second Annual Report, June, 1982
2. Third Annual Report, June, 1983
3. Fourth Annual Report, June, 1984
4. Fifth Annual Report, June, 1985
5. Sixth Annual Report, June, 1986
6. Seventh Annual Report, June, 1987
7. Eighth Annual Report, June, 1988
8. Ninth Annual Report, June, 1989
9. Tenth Annual Report, June, 1990
10. Some comments on campus reviews, January 1983
11. Some comments on campus reviews (2nd ed.), January 1986
12. Some comments on campus reviews (3rd ed.), January 198
13. Guidelines for the review process